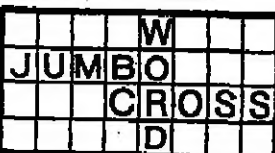


## THE TIMES Christmas

... eve ...  
... begins with a 36-page  
issue of The Times



... clues  
Sharpen your  
wits with the  
Jumbo Crossword

... past  
Searching for Santa in the  
Deep South - by Truman  
Capote

... present  
Match the personalities to  
their ideal gifts

... box  
Four-page pull-out guide to  
television and radio

... tree  
A question of yolkas  
and snosnas: Christmas  
in Moscow

... games  
Previews and fixtures of  
all the holiday sport

... quiz  
The Times quiz of 1983

## Rate Bill attack by Rippon

Mr Geoffrey Rippon, a former Conservative Secretary of State for the Environment, told MPs that the Government's rate capping Bill was deplorable and a classic example of elective dictatorship.

But the measure was defended by Mrs Margaret Thatcher as being overwhelmingly popular among ratepayers.

Parliamentary report, page 4

## Trade rebound

Britain's trade figures showed an estimated surplus of £317m last month after a £219m deficit in October as exports had their second best month ever. Page 13

## Shipyard vote

Workers at the threatened Scott Lithgow shipyard have supported the call for a national shipbuilding strike over pay from January 6. Page 2

## Oil price held

BNOC is to hold the price of North Sea oil at \$30 a barrel for four months to the relief of Opec producers. Page 13

## Pound saver

The Prime Minister seems to have saved the £1 note for now, after reports of Treasury attempts to spirit it away and leave only the coin. Page 3

## Bank strike

Many high street banks face serious disruption this afternoon as some counter clerks walk out in protest at losing their Christmas "early closing" perk. Page 3

## Postal peace

Post Office staff at Shepherds Bush, west London, who have been on strike since December 1, are returning to work today. Page 17

## England dates

England now know their schedule of qualifying games for the 1986 World Cup finals. Page 17

## Leader page, 11

Letters on wages councils, from Mr C. Pond; video fears, from Mr N. March; Hunnings' small businesses from Lord Wilson of Rievaulx.

## Features, pages 8-10

Dr Fitzgerald's appeal for a concerted attack on the IRA; Robert Fisk visits the British peace-keeping HQ in Beirut; 70 years of word-crosses. Friday Page: a FS from Peter Rabbit; Spectrum; Namibia's insecurity forces.

## Obituary, page 12

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# Thatcher moves to silence men behind the IRA

By Philip Webster Political Reporter

The Prime Minister yesterday called for a fresh assessment of the defences available against terrorism, with a special emphasis on stopping republican politicians inciting violence.

The Cabinet spent nearly an hour discussing the repercussions of last Saturday's Harrods bombing, which killed five people and injured 90 others, and agreed that things could not be left as they were.

It paid particular attention to what it regards as the growing menace of incitement to violence by prominent figures in the republican community.

Mr James Prior, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Mr Leon Brittan, the Home Secretary, and the law officers were therefore asked to consider not only further measures of policing and security but also how the common law against incitement to violence could be more effectively applied.

They will report back to the Cabinet early in the new year.

As expected, the Cabinet decided against proscribing Provisional Sinn Féin, the political wing of the IRA, accepting Mr Prior's advice that such a ban could not help the situation in Northern Ireland. The Government's policy in this respect therefore remains as it was, although it was emphasised afterwards that it will be kept under review.

MPs were last night attaching

significance to the decision to examine how the incitement laws could be better used. It was seen as a clear expression of the strength of the Government's wish to act against the men behind the bombers.

Ministers have become increasingly aware of public offence at statements by leading republican politicians about what they see as the legitimate link between the bullet and the ballot box.

In an exclusive article for *The Times*, Dr Garret Fitzgerald, the Irish Prime Minister, urges Mrs Thatcher to join forces with Dublin in a commitment to defeat the IRA gunmen and bombers (page 10).

Ministers believe such remarks would almost certainly come under the law on incitement because they amount to encouragement for terrorist acts.

There was little clue in Whitehall last night on what further measures ministers might recommend, although increased deployment of manpower and improvement of intelligence links seemed most likely.

There appears to be little Government enthusiasm for internment of suspected terrorists or the introduction of identity cards, but the ending of official contacts with Sinn Féin is likely to be considered.

In the Commons yesterday, Mrs Thatcher praised the police and expressed sympathy for bereaved families. She said: "We would all like, especially at Christmas time, to place on record our thanks for the bravery and courage of the police, and particularly to remember those families who will not have a loved one with them this Christmas because of the bombing last Saturday."

She agreed with a Conservative backbencher who had criticised the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament for staging a demonstration in London on Tuesday, which took policemen away from their street patrols.

The Prime Minister said it would have been a nice gesture if those who had planned demonstrations had cancelled them in favour of fighting terrorism.

A Conservative MP, meanwhile, has asked the Attorney General to refer to the Director of Public Prosecutions the contents of Granada Television's *World in Action* programme last Monday about Mr Gerry Adams, the president of Sinn Féin and MP for Belfast, West.

Mr Robert Adley said in a letter to Sir Michael Havers that the programme contained allegations which, if substantiated, indicated that Mr Adams had broken the law.

Financing terror, page 2

## Harrods bomb hunt police release two men

By Stewart Tendler and Arthur Osman

Two of the four men held by London detectives investigating the Harrods bombing were released yesterday, while other officers questioned a man in Birmingham and another in Manchester.

The man held by police in Manchester has been identified as a Mr Gerry Small. All the men have been held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

Scotland Yard detectives arrived to interview a student who had been detained at first light in Sparkhill area of the city.

An organization called the Irish Freedom Movement in London, which said: "We support the armed struggle to get Britain out of Northern Ireland," said his name was Alan O'Dwyer and he was in his early twenties.

A member of the movement said Mr O'Dwyer was detained at 6.50am of the house of a friend. At the same time officers raided a house in London where he usually lived.

Mr O'Dwyer was being held at Sutton Coldfield police station. His detention followed a series of early morning raids on homes in the West Midlands.

Scotland Yard said yesterday there had been no change in the conviction of the officers injured by Saturday's Provisional IRA blast, which killed five people.

Harrods announced the formation of the Knightsbridge Fund, for the benefit of victims and their relatives. The fund may be also used for the victims of other terrorist attacks in the United Kingdom.

A spokesman for Harrods said the store and House of Fraser, which owns Harrods, have started the fund with £50,000. Lord Tony Pandy, the former Speaker of the Commons, will be chairman of the trustees.

Contributions can be paid into any Barclays bank, to "the Knightsbridge Fund. Account number 105556661". As the Yard investigation continued yesterday, a spokesman disclosed that the part-time car dealer who sold the Austin 1300 used for the bombing lives in west London.

The description of the buyer has proved so sparse that detectives are very unlikely to issue an arrest warrant.

A man who had been held by the West Midlands police since December 13 was served with an exclusion order last night and it was expected he would be flown to Belfast.

Members of the Irish Freedom Movement protested yesterday outside Birmingham's main police station about the detention under the Prevention of Terrorism Act of Martin McAllister, aged 30, of Crossmaglen.

Mr McAllister was detained at Birmingham Airport when he arrived on a flight from Belfast. He said he was in Britain to help with his double-glazing business from an outlet in Coventry.

In the mid-1970s he was convicted of possessing arms and being a member of the IRA.

## Cigarette prices up next month

By Derek Harris

The price of some tobacco is rising again, with 2p added to a pack of 20 cigarettes. Imperial Tobacco, Britain's biggest tobacco manufacturer, made the move yesterday and the other big makers are expected to follow suit soon.

Imperial is introducing the increases from January 23 with distributors benefiting from the rise as well as the company and the Inland Revenue.

There are 2p increases on 25 gramme packs of pipe tobacco and on several packs of small cigars. Larger cigars rise by between 1p to 2p each.

The recommended price of John Player Special King Size rises to £1.13 for 20, while Embassy Number 1 King Size goes up to £1.14. John Player Superkings rise by 3p to £1.13.

## British Aerospace may abandon Airbus project

By Edward Townsend, Industrial Correspondent

Sir Austin Pearce, chairman of British Aerospace, said yesterday that he would pull the company out of Airbus Industrie's plans to build a 150-seat airliner if the British Government failed to provide £437m of launch aid.

The aid he said, would be in the form of a deferred interest loan repayable by 1997, and British Aerospace would be contributing £200m to the European consortium from its own resources. It was essential that the Government make an early decision on the remainder.

The aircraft, the A320, is due in service by 1988.

He said: "I am not prepared to see this company starved of finance just to get the A320 project going. We are going to protect our other projects in British Aerospace. We have got high technology skills and they need to be maintained."

British Aerospace, has a 20 per cent stake in Airbus Industrie with the French and West Germans as the other chief partners, has been frustrated by government hesitancy on the A320.

Sir Austin and Sir Raymond Lygo, the managing director, believe the delay has been caused by the Treasury's concern over the effect the granting of aid would have on the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement.

The A320 will complete the three-member Airbus family and provide increased competition to Boeing of the US.

It is planned as a super-efficient airliner for the 1990s to replace the world's present fleet of 3,500 noisy and fuel-inefficient medium-range aircraft. Airbus Industrie says emphasis will be placed on market appeal and describes the A320 as "the

Continued on back page, col 5

## Swedish hamlet may not welcome Santa back

From Christopher Mosey, Stockholm

Most of the 300 inhabitants of the Swedish village of Gesmda are all for Santa Claus. Others are more dubious and there is mounting opposition here to Mr Claus's projected arrival.

The bone of contention is the plan of Mr Mark McCormack, the American businessman and sports magnate, to establish in a patch of forest at the foot of a local mountain, Santaland, a tourist complex comprising Father Christmas's home and workshops and such garish additions as the Palace of the Snow Queen, a dinosaur park and a mail-order toy company.

The idea came from two Englishmen, Mr Ken Edwards and Mr Gerry O'Sullivan, who work for Mr McCormack's Leisure World International in London. It would produce a

Swedish equivalent of Disneyland, but dedicated to Santa Claus, attracting both winter sports enthusiasts and summer tourists.

Gesmda, consisting of a few picturesque log cabins and farms, overlooks Stijan, one of Sweden's most beautiful lakes in the holiday area of Dalarna.

When Santaland is built, 25 acres of forest will be felled and the towers of the Snow Queen's Palace will tower over the village.

The scheme has been given planning permission by an enthusiastic council and work is due to start in April. If all goes well, Santaland will be open for business by Christmas, 1984.

Mr Lennart Thorslund, a local councillor, backs the

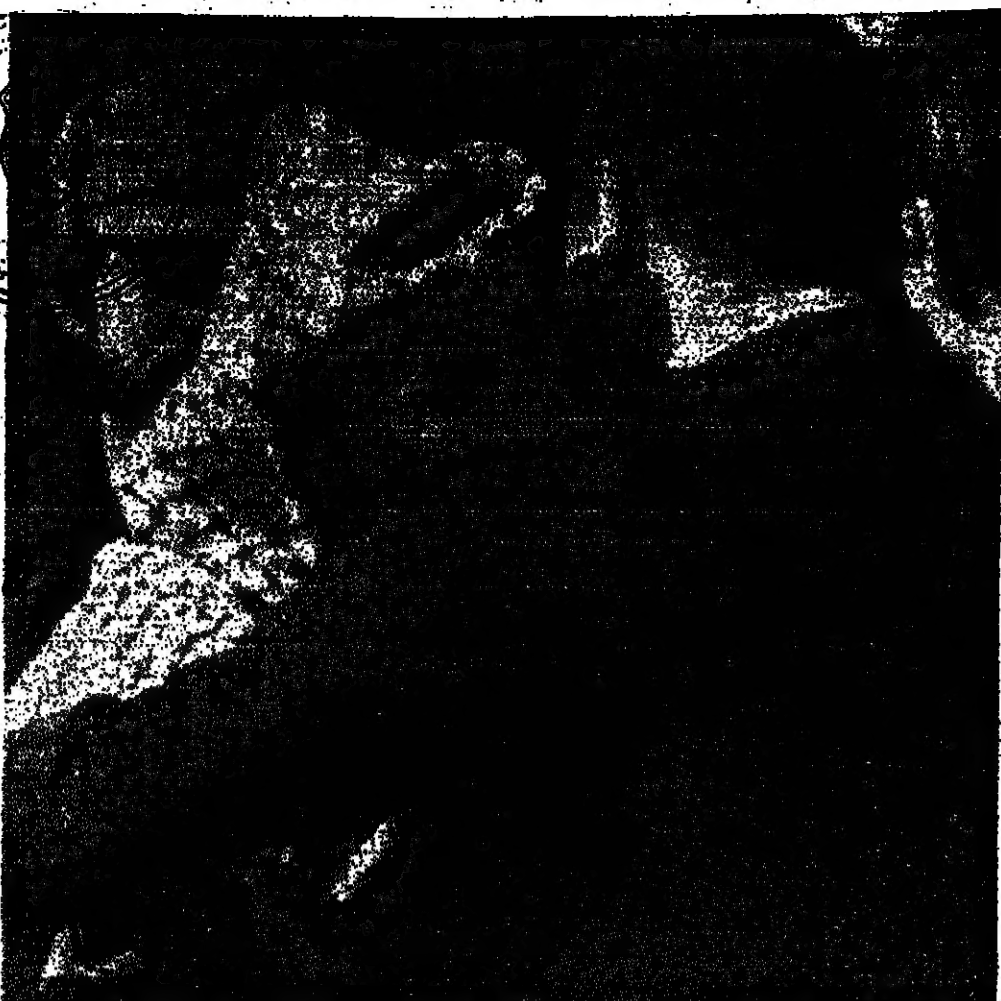
project. "The council will not be involved financially but a group has been working to get the scheme off the ground since 1981," he said. "It will be a quality investment, also involv-

ing children's charity organizations."

There are hopes that thousands of letters from children all over the world, which at this time of the year arrive here, addressed simply to Father Christmas, Sweden, will be routed to Santaland and dealt with there.

Mrs Ann-Britt Persson, who works in Gesmda's only shop, said: "Our village is in dire need of employment, otherwise families here will not be able to stay together. Santaland will provide work and there will be opportunities for various services to be set up to cater for the complex."

But another villager, Mrs Siv Andersson, said: "I don't like the idea at all. Our nature will be ruined and no one has any idea how much we will actually benefit."



Dramatic reconciliation: Mr Arafat and President Mubarak in Cairo

## Zimbabwe Air Force officers freed

From Our Correspondent Harare

The last three white Air Force officers detained in connection with the Zimbabwean warplanes sabotage case were released here yesterday after 16 months' imprisonment.

Wing Commander John Cox, aged 36, Air Lieutenant Barrington Lloyd, aged 31, and Air Lieutenant Neville Weir, aged 24, walked out of the Chikurubi maximum security prison in Harare at 11.30. All three have been given orders of liberation stipulating that they leave the country within seven days.

A family friend of Wing Commander Cox, who was held in Dublin, said his airman intended to remain in Zimbabwe for several days to officially resign from the Air Force.

There is speculation that Wing Commander Cox's medical condition helped to bring forward the release. His wife, Sandy, said last week that he could lose the sight of one eye without laser treatment to stop internal bleeding. The treatment is not available in Zimbabwe.

The acting Minister of Home Affairs, Mr Simbi Mubake, said the men were being allowed to remain in Zimbabwe temporarily to wind up their affairs. They were released on the recommendation of the country's detention review tribunal, which reviewed their cases two weeks ago.

Air Vice-Marshal Hugh Slater, the most senior of the officers who acted as leader during the months in detention, said yesterday: "This is the best Christmas present the rest of us could have had" (Our Foreign Staff writes).

But, he added: "It must be remembered that they should never have been taken back to jail in the first place. They have lost 16 months out of their lives."

Air Vice-Marshal Slater, Air Commodore Philip Fife and Air Lieutenant Nigel Lewis-Walker have been in Britain since being allowed to leave Zimbabwe. Wing Commander Briscoe left for the United States on Wednesday.

Commenting on the release, the Foreign Office in London said yesterday: "This is a welcome development."

Zimbabwe's Chief Justice, Telford Georges, has resigned after six months and is to take up the post of Chief Justice of the Bahamas next year (AP reports).

## Egypt heals rift with Arafat

From Christopher Walker, Jerusalem

A profound change in the political complexion of the Middle East was signalled yesterday by the dramatic reconciliation between Egypt and the Palestine Liberation Organization after an unexpected, two-hour private meeting in Cairo - between President Mubarak and Mr Yasser Arafat.

There was speculation that the rapprochement - the first of its kind since Egypt signed the Camp David treaty with Israel in March, 1979 - could assist in reviving the deadlocked Middle East peace process via renewed negotiations between the PLO and Jordan which could now enjoy Egyptian blessing.

The Reagan Administration is still hopeful of resurrecting its 1982 peace initiative, which is why it put strong pressure on Israel to permit the PLO evacuation from the northern Lebanese port of Tripoli to go ahead unhindered. Mr Arafat is

apparently seen by the White House as having a key role to play.

But any hopes that the Cairo talks might herald a lifting of the deep pessimism surrounding peace prospects in the region was countered by bitter criticism by Israel, whose hawkish Prime Minister, Mr Yitzhak Shamir, was quick to express "regret and astonishment" that the historic meeting had taken place.

One immediate result was to plunge Israeli-Egyptian relations to their lowest point since the Camp David treaty was signed. In his incredulous statement, Mr Shamir - one of the original Israeli opponents of the peace treaty - recalled that immediately after the murder of President Sadat, Mr Arafat and his supporters had danced for joy in the streets of Beirut.

Mr Shamir's outspoken attack was quickly followed by Israel's Foreign Ministry which alleged that the Cairo meeting, which had begun with a formal embrace between the two participants, was a "grave blow to the peace process".

The Foreign Ministry added: "There will be no peace or stability in the Middle East until the murderous PLO disappears from the international scene."

The force of Israel's condemnation reflected deep concern here that Mr Arafat has succeeded in extricating his political credibility from the military defeat of Tripoli. The reconciliation was, thought

Continued on back page, col 2

## Eagle Star record bid is matched

Finance and Industry, page 13

West German insurer Allianz Versicherungs yesterday matched BAT's takeover bid for Eagle Star Holdings, with a 675p per share offer to shareholders.

The bid from Allianz is the seventh in the fiercely contested battle for Eagle Star which began 10 weeks ago. Allianz made its latest offer after the City Takeover Panel set a deadline of 4.30pm on December 30 for the final bidding. Last night Eagle Star said that although both bids were equal its board believes strongly that BAT is more appropriate parent.

However, the outcome of the bids was made more difficult to predict last night by reports that BAT and Allianz had arranged a meeting to discuss a way of resolving the battle before the December 30 deadline.

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SCOTCH WHISKY  
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## Bank customers face long queues in Christmas holiday action

By Paul Routledge, Labour Editor

Many high street banks face serious disruption today as some counter clerks stage an afternoon walkout in protest at the loss of their Christmas "early closing" perk.

The Banking, Insurance and Finance Union yesterday reported that early returns from the provinces indicate growing support for its industrial action and predicted that "tens of thousands" of its members would stop work after lunch.

A spokesman for the London

clearing banks said the situation was likely to be patchy with some banks closed and others open. Long queues of irritated customers are expected at the banks still doing business. But the banks say their cash dispensing machines will be in working order during the holiday period.

The dispute is over the employers' decision that the traditional Christmas Eve half-day holiday is not applicable because today is not Christmas

Eve. The banking union, which is affiliated to the TUC, carried out a secret ballot of its members which produced a 53 per cent majority for taking back by strike action the half-day holiday that they have enjoyed for the past decade.

An exception is the Co-operative Bank, which has offered a half-day in lieu for staff who continue working, and which has been exempted from the union's action.

The banking union claims that employers took away a half-day festive season holiday without agreement or negotiation. The banks agree that when the last trading day before Christmas falls on Christmas Eve, it is the custom to close at noon.

This year, however, Christmas Eve is on a day when bank staff have the whole day off, and only in 1977 did the banks bring down the shutters when December 23 fell on a Friday. And that policy met with public protest.

Mr Leif Mills, the general secretary of BIFU, said yesterday: "We expect some 80,000 members to withdraw their labour tomorrow and a considerable number of non-members are joining the action with us, particularly in Lloyds Bank."

He said there would be many hundreds of banks closed, and many others capable of giving only a skeleton service.

But a spokesman for the clearing banks said most would remain open today. Of the 241,000 people employed in the industry, only 24,000 voted to strike. The level of disruption would therefore depend on how many staff at each branch belonged to BIFU, and how many heeded the instruction to stop work.

## Dilberta finds melon squash quite a mouthful



How does an elephant crack a Christmas treat? First, catch your treat, in this case a honeydew melon. Next, tread on it, gingerly. Now eat the result, something between a Christmas pudding and a melon squash. Lauren Chandler, aged six, and her cousin Carrie Clark, aged eight, were visiting London Zoo at Regent's Park yesterday when Dilberta the elephant (with her keeper, Mr Joe Haddock) set to. (Photographs: John Voss).

## Poison warning over fake 'fresh' turkeys

Consumer experts say that thousands of turkeys could be the cause of food poisoning because some shopkeepers are defrosting frozen poultry and selling it as freshly killed.

If the birds are taken home and frozen again, bacteria will multiply, there could even be a food poisoning epidemic, West Midlands County Council's consumer services department says.

The department has sent urgent warnings to all local authorities after "ambulating across" the practice in one shop a few days ago. Since then more than twenty shops in the Birmingham area have been discovered doing the same thing.

The department said: "We advise anyone who has bought such birds and refrozen them to throw them away." Tell-tale signs are frost or water inside the bird.

A woman who hung a holly wreath on her front door found that rain water made the berries turn green. She complained to the West Sussex

trading standards officer who said the berries were green peas painted red.

Mr Fred Kennington, aged 76, is to keep his job as Father Christmas inside of hitting a boy at his grove. Mr Kennington had been checked by one boy and hit out, but the lad decided, and Mr Kennington hit an innocent boy behind. The police were told but the matter was dropped and Mr Kennington is to keep his job at the Pentagon shopping centre in Chatham, Kent.

Orkney islanders have received a free supply of "yule logs" by accident. The untreated timbers were washed ashore on the island of Borsay after falling from a ship bound for Norway.

A snapping bull caused chaos among Christmas shoppers yesterday after escaping as it was being led into a slaughter house in Ashfield, Nottinghamshire. It attacked two abattoir workers, then leapt over a 5ft wall and charged shoppers. It was shot dead by police.

## £130m festive tips to share

By Robin Young

In the season of goodwill and considerable largesse something in the order of £130m will be changing hands as seasonal tips, gratuities and Christmas boxes. That excludes regular tips and service charges, and the cash value of gifts and presents in kind, which are likely to include some four million bottles of wine and spirits, perhaps a million cigarettes, and 200,000 lunches.

These results are extrapolated from a limited survey of Christmas tipping habits carried out among my colleagues at *The Times* and my neighbours in Hackney, London's poorest borough.

On average Hackney residents gave larger tips and Christmas boxes than *Times* staff, but they gave to fewer recipients. While *Times* people claimed that they would be parting with an average of £8.37, this Christmas, the average expected in Hackney was the bill for seasonal goodwill would amount to £7.84. In both groups men were appreciably more generous tippers than women.

The most commonly tipped group were newspaper delivery boys and girls, who could expect to receive something from just more than three-quarters of respondent households. This was half as many as would be tipping the next most popular groups who were, in order, the

dustmen and milkmen. Postmen could expect a Christmas box from only a third of our respondents.

All these groups except the newspaper boys and girls were going to be tipped more generously in Hackney than by *Times* staff. On the other hand my newspaper colleagues' expenditure was increased by handouts to a wide variety of cleaning ladies, who scooped the pool for "biggest tips, namings, window cleaners, secretaries, car park attendants and railway station staff.

Both the biggest and the smallest totals were dispensed by *Times* staff members. The top was £100, and the lowest £1, of which the gift giver admitted 50p was hypothetical and dependent on the potential recipient asking for it.

Dustmen can expect to receive from nothing to £20 ("there are five of them"; cleaners, employed less than £5; and milkmen never more than £5. One postman has received £10, but no others were down for more than £2. It was commonly pleaded that "they are all casuals at Christmas" or "I never see them anyway".

Few people looked with favour on collecting boxes, bearing seasonal greetings from the staff strategically placed on retail shop counters, though a few respondents said they

would expect to put up to 50p in as many as four of these. Butchers were reckoned noticeably more tipworthy than any other shop-tending group.

Seldom considered groups to whom appreciation will rarely be shown include street cleaners, laundrette ladies, garage mechanics, coalmen and telephonists.

The average tip for all recipients (counting dustmen as one) was £1.23. Hackney households mostly expected to give four tips and seldom more than six. *Times* staff claimed to give an average of just more than eight tips per household, but the range varied from one to seventeen.

Attitudes to tipping varied widely from "everybody regular gets £5" (*Times* executive) to "nobody with whom I have a commercial contractual relationship gets a penny extra" (*Times* editorial staff). Some men were vague about tipping: "I think my wife attends to the milkman", was all one could offer. Another recalled being trapped by the postman, proffering a £5 note and asking, unsuccessfully, for change.

The most defiant attitude was among those who refuse to tip dustmen (a surprising 48 per cent). "If I gave the dustmen a bottle of whisky they would probably do what they do with everything else, drop it in the drive", one said.

## Whitehall caterers face competition

By Philip Webster, Political Reporter

Civil Service catering is to be thrown open to competition from private firms, in an attempt to get better value for the £14m annual subsidy towards the food and drink consumed at work by government employees.

Government departments responsible for the 680 official restaurants and canteens all over Britain are to be allowed to choose between outside contractors and the Civil Service Catering Organization (CISCO).

Plant and equipment will continue to be provided by the departments concerned and the Government is to spend an extra £1.65m a year for the next five years to improve facilities.

The changes, announced yesterday by Mr Barney Heyhoe, Minister of State at the Treasury, came after an official scrutiny of the system in February, which found that only 35 per cent of civil

servants used available staff facilities.

The scrutineers, including Miss Sybil Barnes, head of catering for Marks & Spencer, stated then: "The predominant picture is one of inefficient, out-of-date kitchens and comfortable dining rooms."

The Government then decided to launch a £1m series of pilot projects to look at other ways of catering the service.

Mr Hayhoe said in his Commons written reply yesterday that under the new plans, CISCO will retain overall central control to ensure consistency of standards among Civil Service facilities. But he added: "It is the intention that contractors and CISCO should compete for departmental catering work on an equal footing."

CISCO, which will continue to charge the departments for advice, guidance and, where it is appropriate, for the provision of services, is to be established as a trading fund.

## Last-minute police plea to drivers

By a Staff Reporter

A last-minute appeal to motorists not to drink and drive this Christmas has been made by Mr Roger Birch, a police association spokesman on traffic matters.

Mr Birch, who is chairman of the traffic committee of the Association of Chief Police Officers and Chief Constables of Sussex, said: "The enormous amount of publicity on this subject for the last two weeks demonstrates how concerned the nation is at the tragedies and hardship drink driving causes."

"The point is that a few weak and selfish people, for the sake of that extra drink, are prepared to jeopardize the lives of others as well as their own."

"There is only one real answer: don't drink and drive."

## Police 'tried to help' alcoholic

By Craig Seton

Social workers and police in Dorset replied yesterday to criticism that nothing had been done to help Mrs Daisy Robbins, a widow aged 67, who was found dead in court on a £1.20 shoplifting charge.

Mrs Robbins, who was described as a chronic alcoholic, was found in a chair with an empty glass by her side at her home in Blandford, Dorset, on Wednesday, shortly before she was due to appear before magistrates, charged with stealing tea and chocolate from a Keymarket store. She had left a note which said: "No one loves me, no one cares, so good bye."

Dorset police said that the prosecution against Mrs Robbins had been initiated by the police in order to help her. She had had six suicide notes over the past two years.

Supt Hayne Russell said yesterday: "Each case is dealt with on its merits. When the police prosecute they not only present evidence but can also offer up other factors which could help people like Mrs Robbins."

Mr Adrian Blunt, a social services team leader, said: "We tried to help her many times. We approached her to try to get her into an old folks' home, but she refused to go."

## Side light ruling on new cars

By Our Transport Editor

Driving on side lights only will be illegal on new cars delivered after 1986 under regulations laid before Parliament yesterday.

It will be possible to park cars with side lights only, but once the ignition is switched on the choice will be between dim-dip (dipped headlights with reduced light), full dip and undipped.

Announcing the regulations yesterday, Mrs Lynda Chalker, Minister of State for Transport, said they followed favourable consultation with motoring organizations.

The regulations will not apply to existing cars or to motor cycles, but the Transport and Road Research Laboratory is to investigate their possible application to motorcycles.

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## Councillor lied to get top job

By a Staff Reporter

A Labour councillor's lie has cost her a £21,000-a-year job as head of Merseyside Enterprise Board.

Lady (Carol) Yapp, was offered the post after an interview on Tuesday, but the offer was withdrawn when she admitted that she had lied about her qualifications.

The deceit of her claim to hold a BA (Economics) degree from Birmingham University was discovered after a telephone call was received in Merseyside county headquarters, where Lady Yapp is a county councillor.

Lady Yapp said yesterday that the lie was no more than a "foolish transgression". She said her failure to complete her degree course lay in tragic personal circumstances and added:

"What is more serious is the question why was the whole might of the local government officer system used to ensure that I was not appointed, even though my skills and expertise remain relevant."

Lady Yapp has been closely involved in the working West Midlands Enterprise Board, which aims to create about

5,000 jobs a year. But its first annual report, published recently, showed a loss of £700,000.

Mr Keve Coombes, the Labour leader of Merseyside County Council, denied that "the system" had cost her the job.

He said: "Nobody is entitled to get a job on the basis of lies. I feel angry about this. It was a stupid act and it is not a technical irregularity to tell lies. There could have been no question of her getting the job."

He said that she was offered the post subject to certain conditions, including a medical examination, the checking of qualifications, and the taking up of references.

But after the call from the West Midlands, Mr Coombes questioned Lady Yapp. He said: "She admitted immediately that she did not have the qualifications. The job offer was withdrawn. That was not by mutual consent, as she has claimed, for she obviously could not carry on."

Lady Yapp, aged 39, is divorced from Sir Stanley Yapp, chairman of West Midlands County Council, who remarried earlier this year.

## Princess's secretary leaves

By David Nicholson-Lord

Mr Oliver Everett, the Princess of Wales's private secretary, is leaving his post to become deputy librarian at the Queen, Buckingham Palace announced yesterday. The move comes after suggestions of a personality clash between the Princess and Mr Everett, leading to several bitter arguments.

The palace declined to comment on the reports yesterday, describing them as "purely speculative". A spokesman added: "It is simply a career choice of Mr Everett's."

The appointment has been made at the understanding that Mr Everett, aged 40, will take over the job of librarian and assistant keeper of the Queen's archives when Sir Robin Mackworth-Young retires.

Mr Everett, who was reported to be on the point of resignation, was formerly the Prince of Wales's assistant private secretary and has been with the Princess since shortly after his wedding. He takes up his new post at Windsor Castle on January 1.

Mr Edward Adeane, the Prince's private secretary, will now act in this capacity to both the Prince and Princess.

## Joiner led double life as burglar

From Our Correspondent

The double life of a craftsman joiner who burgled his customers, friends and relatives, was disclosed in York Crown Court yesterday.

Keith Magson, aged 31, of Huntingdon, near York, admitted more than 180 offences of burglary and deception. He was jailed for three years.

Mr Peter Charlesworth, for the prosecution, said that Magson's victims during his one-man crime wave included his best man and the vicar, as well as customers of his family joinery firm, which meant he was sometimes employed to repair the damage he had caused.

Four policemen were said to have taken two hours to remove £20,000 worth of stolen goods from Magson's house. Cheque books and bank cards were also stolen and Magson forged cheques to obtain hundreds of pounds.

But the court was told that Magson spent none of the proceeds of his burglaries on himself or his family, who knew nothing of his criminal activities. Instead, he saved more than £6,000.

## Cable TV gets more channels

By Bill Johnston

Eleven companies have been given approval by the Government to expand their existing cable television networks, enabling them to provide about four new channels to their subscribers as early as next month.

The networks are used to provide about two million people in Britain with the four broadcast channels because of reception difficulties. The cable companies will remain responsible for ensuring that subscribers to their networks can receive all the broadcast signals in addition to any other channels offered on the expanded services.

The approved companies are British Telecom (Irvine, Milton Keynes and Washington); Cablevision (Southall); Cablevision (Wellingborough); Greenwich Cablevision; Philips Cable Television (Northampton and Tredgar); Radio Rentals (eight areas); Rediffusion Consumer Electronics (53 areas); Television (areas yet unspecified); Teleline (Princes Risborough and Wendover); Visionaire Cable (areas yet to be specified) and West Wales Aerials (Llandeilo).

The networks are in addition to the 11 new networks given conditional franchises by the Government about a month ago to operate with about 30 channels. The new multichannel networks will not be operational for about 18 months, but the networks given approval yesterday will be able to upgrade their systems almost immediately.

Mr Leon Brittan, the Home Secretary, outlined the details in a written parliamentary answer

## £21,000 for Sellafield death family

By a Staff Reporter

The first payment under a voluntary compensation scheme for deaths that might have been induced by radiation was announced yesterday by British Nuclear Fuels and the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers.

Dependents of a former worker at the company's Sellafield (formerly Windscale) nuclear power station had been paid £21,645, the joint statement said, in respect of his death from leukaemia in 1965.

The dependants could have taken their case to court, but any decision would have been on an "all or nothing" basis, according to the court's assessment of the probability that the death was caused by radiation.

The voluntary procedure, set up a year ago, is designed to take into account varying degrees of probability, with provision for the payment of percentages of full compensation. The amount awarded represented a half of full compensation, the company said.

American art dealers were offered works stolen from the Royal Academy by Sagarvali Houghton, Southwark Crown Court was told yesterday.



Party spirit: Sital Odedra, aged 24, with Mr Kinnock

## Kinnock defends council

Mr Neil Kinnock, leader of the Labour Party, bounced a child on his knee at a day nursery in Hackney, London, yesterday, and said: "These are the people at the cutting edge of the cuts."

He was visiting some of the facilities which the Hackney council says will be closed if the Government proceeds with its plans to reduce borough spending by £21.6m.

On Wednesday a High Court judge gave the borough leave to go to court to challenge the new spending targets set for Hackney by Mr Patrick Jenkin, Secretary of State for the Environment.

Mr Kinnock, speaking at the Leam Road nursery in Stoke Newington, defended the council's spending record. Vital services to the young, the elderly and the handicapped, had to be protected, he said.

Michael Cotgrove, aged 37, a carpenter from Canvey Island, Essex, described by the judge as "the victim of a plausible rogue", was jailed for two years.

## Thatcher saves the pound note

By Julian Haviland, Political Editor

The Prime Minister appeared yesterday to have rescued the £1 note from the clutches of the Treasury. Leading from the front, in the style which she has on occasion demonstrated before, she told Mr Marcus Fox, Conservative MP for Shipley, that she had reason to believe that the note would be retained.

Mrs Thatcher did not say for how long, and a wise politician never says never, and a week is a long time in politics. But Mr Fox, who sat up till after 1am on Wednesday in the vain hope of wringing an equal reassurance out of a Treasury minister, heard all he wanted. He now believes, to coin a phrase, that the pound note is safe with the Prime Minister.

When he first raised the question Mr Fox accused the Treasury of contemplating a "little dirty work" to spirit the note away and leave only the coin.

In the Lords on Tuesday a minister, Lord Glenarthur, caused alarm when he said the

Government meant to withdraw the note "in due course", and complained that it cost a great deal of money to keep pound notes in circulation. He said a £1 note lasted about 11 months, and the £1 coin introduced this year would last about 40 years.

On Wednesday morning Mr Fox said the £1 note was "central to everything" and begged Mr Ian Stewart, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, to promise that it would live.

But Mr Stewart was canny. If the note was under threat, he said, the threat came from the way in which it was misused by the public. Instead of being carefully placed in wallets it was now "frequently stuffed into pockets and purses". The result had been a serious deterioration of notes in circulation.

There may be ways of producing a £1 note that has a longer life than the present model, a Treasury spokesman said last night after the Prime

Minister's comment (Kenneth Gosling writes).

But it is still government policy, the Treasury insisted, that the note should be phased out in favour of the coin. When that will happen is not clear.

"We have to assess it as we go along," it said.

But it is not intended to introduce a plastic note on the lines of that of that in use, and apparently highly popular, on the Isle of Man. There have been security objections to it does not have a watermark or a metal thread.

Mr John Field, chairman of Bradbury, Wilkinson, the banknote company that developed the note in collaboration with Du Pont, the US chemical company, admitted that that was the main drawback, although there was less risk of this happening with the plastic £1.

"We do lots of other things to the paper that makes forgery difficult," he said. The Bank of England's own printing works

takes care of production and research. Mr Field said his company enjoyed a good relationship with the bank.

"They are fully aware of what we do and what is available," he said. "We do talk about it quite a lot."

There are about 550,000 of the plastic notes, in the Isle of Man. The island's auditor, Mr Christopher Tovell, said he had been utterly astonished at local reaction since the note arrived a month ago.

As for the £1 coins, the Royal Mint says there are 148 million in circulation. Demand has risen in the run up to Christmas.



PARLIAMENT December 22 1983

Economic good cheer from Chancellor

THE ECONOMY

The recovery that was occurring in the economy was giving great cheer to the British people and great despondency to the Labour Party. Mr Nigel Lawson, Chancellor of the Exchequer, said in the Commons shortly before the House adjourned for its Christmas recess.

He said that provided the Government maintained firm control of public expenditure, he remained confident that it would be able to reduce the level of taxation during the lifetime of this Parliament.

He agreed it was particularly bad that the poor should pay such a large proportion of their income in taxation and there was a strong case for raising the tax thresholds as soon as he had the headroom to do so responsibly.

Mr Lawson said output this year was expected to be about 3 per cent higher than last year and there was room for cautious satisfaction that the rate of unemployment now appeared to have levelled off.

Mr David Alton (Liverpool, Mosley Hill, L) said that if CBI figures were right, growth would only be 2 per cent and that would mean stabilizing at the present level of unemployment.

Mr Lawson: Of course there is concern about the level of unemployment but employment is rising for the first time since the recession began.

The Treasury has made its best forecast and its track record is considerably better than outside bodies. The forecast of the European Commission is that our growth next year will be higher than any country in the Community, as indeed it has been this year.

Mr Ian Lloyd (Havant, C) in the context of comments this (Thursday) morning on the radio on the favourable OECD report on Britain's economy, did he hear the previous piece of economic blasphemy by Mr Roy Hattersley, the shadow chancellor who amounted to a rag bag of discredited policies. Rather than the sermon on the Mount it was more like one on Mount Desolation.

Mr Lawson: He is right. Of course Mr Hattersley's record as a Chancellor is well known. We remember, for example, that during

the election campaign he said there was no doubt inflation would be in double figures by the end of this year if the Government remained in office.

Mr Jack Straw (Blackburn, Lab): None of the major industrialized countries suffered a greater collapse in industrial and manufacturing output than under this Government between 1979 and 1983. When will manufacturing output return to its level of May 1979 - before or after 1990?

Mr Lawson: I do not know when manufacturing output is going to be at the 1979 level. What is encouraging is that output as a whole in this country is already back to the level it was at the peak in 1979 and is continuing to rise.

Mr Alan Heward (Stratford-on-Avon, C) having regard to the present rates of growth in the UK economy, he recently assumed the duties of Father Christmas and having regard to prospective rates of growth, will he now go further and as Father Godmother wear his magic wand to endow our friends in the United States with a medium-term financial strategy?

Mr Lawson: Not being in possession of a magic wand, I am unable to perform that miracle, although it would be very desirable if it were to be brought about. I am grateful for the role in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has been cast by the Ghost of Christmas Past which was that adopted by Mr Hattersley on the wireless this morning.

Mr Anthony Beaumont-Dark (Birmingham, Selby Oak, C) said now the economy showed real signs of growth. As Mr Lawson said, it was not a matter of raising the tax threshold but of raising the tax rate. It was important to raise the tax threshold so that those on the lowest incomes were relieved of their burdens.

Mr Lawson told him that there was a strong case for raising the tax thresholds as soon as he had the headroom to do so responsibly, but the only solution (he said) is to have firm control of public spending, something the Opposition is antipathetic too.

Mr Alfred Dubs (Battersea, Lab) said that the Cabinet was going to reduce taxes next April. If this was achieved, it would be at the expense of pensioners, who could not afford to pay their electricity bills, people on housing benefit and

those who desperately needed decent local government services which would be cut because of the Government's economic policies.

Mr Lawson said the Government's expenditure plans for 1984-85 were a prudent compromise between what was necessary to maintain essential public services and to maintain a gradually declining proportion of total national output accounted for by public spending for the benefit of the economy and to give room for tax decreases over the lifetime of this Parliament.

Mr William Clark (Croydon South, C) said Mr Hattersley had advocated on the radio tax reductions at the same time as an increase in public spending. That sort of policy would be disastrous for the economy. It would not only increase overspending but increase interest rates. This would hit industry and cause more job losses.

Mr Lawson: He is right. It would lead to a resurgence in the inflationary spiral which happened when Labour was last in office.

Mr Richard Wainwright (Colne Valley, L) said the increase in gross domestic product should enable the Chancellor to allow more public sector borrowing than he previously intended. This would make room for urgently needed cuts in taxes on jobs and on low pay.

Mr Lawson said he was glad Mr Wainwright, in contrast to Labour, sought lower taxation. The economy and the nation needed this.

But he added the level of public borrowing still needs to be brought down as a proportion of GDP.

Mr Lawson added later: I am hopeful that over the next three years to be able to maintain the total volume of public expenditure constant in real terms.

Mr Osagha McDonald (Thurrock, Lab), an Opposition spokesman on Treasury and economic affairs, said it would be better to look at the comparison with the American growth rate, expected to be 5 per cent next year and brought about by policies which the Prime Minister so viciously condemned recently.

Mr Lawson: I am pleased, if a bit surprised, to see her enthusiasm for President Reagan and his policies. (Conservative cheer.) It is not evident every day in the House.

The Americans have followed a tight control of the money supply.



Lloyd Hattersley's economic blasphemy

not of the fiscal deficit. They have another advantage - there is no Socialist party in the United States.

Mr Kenneth Carlisle (Lincoln, C) asked whether the Chancellor had any further evidence of a recovery in investment in the United Kingdom.

Mr Lawson: Total investment in the first three quarters of this year is estimated to have been about 4 1/2 per cent higher than in the same period last year. The December Department of Industry intentions survey points to a 7 per cent increase in industrial investment when Labour was last in office.

Mr Carlisle: Would he agree that if this trend is to be consolidated in the new year not only will profits have to continue to increase but it is essential that interest rates start to come down again?

Mr Lawson: I share the importance he attaches to the level of interest rates. That is why the Government is determined to keep public borrowing under control and keep them falling as a proportion of gross domestic product.

One of the most encouraging aspects of this particular recovery has been the sharp increase in company profitability.

Mr Enoch Powell (South Down, OUP): Is not the reduced level of UK surplus on current account in 1983 an indication that less British capital was being exported in that year than previously?

Mr Lawson: He is right. Because the balance of payment has to sum up to zero overall it must follow as a logical necessity. However, he will have noticed the recent revision by the Statistical Office, a sharp upward review of invisible earnings over the first nine months, which makes it clear that the current account surplus this year will be significantly higher than forecast in the autumn statement.

LOCAL FINANCE

After the Prime Minister had earlier described the Bill on rate capping as overwhelmingly popular among ratepayers, a number of MPs, including Conservatives, protested about the proposed legislation.

During questions to Mr John Biffen, Leader of the House, following the statement outlining future business, Mr Neil Kinnock, Leader of the Opposition, said: The Opposition on both sides will be resisting the second reading of the Rates Bill because it would make major constitutional changes and undermine a long history of local and localism which the House should defend.

Mr Geoffrey Rippon (Hexham, C) asked: Will he consider withdrawing the second reading of the Rates Bill and having a debate instead on the Government's proposals for reforming the rating system? (Loud Conservative cheer.)

Is it because the Government is

ashamed of the Rates Bill that it has published it just before Christmas and is to debate it immediately after Christmas?

This is a deplorable Bill which raises major constitutional issues. It is a classic example of elective dictatorship. Will he at least give an assurance that because of its constitutional importance the committee stage will be debated on the floor of the House? (Renewed cheer.)

Mr Biffen: Mr Rippon is a privy councillor and therefore has a reasonable expectation of being called in the debate on January 17. I cannot understand why he feels it necessary to make a preliminary speech now.

Mr Edward Taylor (Southend East, C) asked him to make clear that the Government was not prepared to allow the appalling anomaly under which agriculture was not subject to rates to continue.

Mr Biffen: I will refer that to the minister in charge of the legislation (Mr Patrick Jenkin) but I have an

inkling that he has quite enough trouble already. (Laughter.)

Mr Anthony Beaumont-Dark (Birmingham, Selby Oak, C) Surely this Bill is a constitutional Bill although the Government says we are a unitary country.

If we are going to have local government run by selected civil servants and the Government in a majority on every council in the land, if that is not a constitutional issue will he say so?

Is it not time the Government instead of trying to hurry this squallid little Bill through as an absolute right to the House to discuss this constitutional issue in full committee on the floor of the House? (Cheer.)

Mr Biffen: The decision whether or not it should be considered in committee on the floor of the House will be for the House to vote upon.

Mr Alfred Dubs (Battersea, Lab) said it was likely the Government was getting the legislation through the Lords. He asked Mr Biffen to confirm that there was no intention

on the Government's part of having the Rates Bill deemed to be a financial measure so that the Lords debate was severely truncated.

Mr Biffen: So far as the case and speed with which this legislation will be secured, in politics it is always wise to travel hopefully. I think Mr Dubs will find his deeper anxieties unfounded.

Earlier, Mr Harvey Proctor (Billerica, C) pointed out to the Prime Minister that 60 per cent of rates came from non-domestic ratepayers who had no direct influence on local elections.

Would he not agree (he went on) that the Government has an ultimate responsibility to protect business, commerce and households from excessive rate burdens?

Mrs Thatcher: Only a minority of the electorate pay rates; that is one of the worrying things about the system. Many industrial and commercial enterprises are not represented in any way on the voting register of the authority to which they pay rates.

Provision for those in need

PM's QUESTIONS

The Opposition should accept that it was necessary to have good management of resources and to live within a budget, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, the Prime Minister, said during question time exchanges in the Commons.

Mr Tony Banks (Newham North West, Lab) had said it was a pity that she would not be able to visit his constituency to see the devastating effect that her economic and social policies were having.

In addition to the unemployment rate there were 27,000 people on social security and 65 per cent of tenants were receiving income support because of housing costs.

While she was eating her Christmas dinner would she think of those people in Newham who could not afford to keep warm and the 40,000 others who would die of hyperthermia during next year? Would she show some remorse?

Mrs Thatcher: By what he said earlier he himself gave evidence that those who are in need are provided for. The pension is higher than previously. Under us pensioners get a Christmas bonus which they did not always get under Labour. There is higher spending on the national health service and a record amount of help in fuel for those who need it.

Mr Neil Kinnock, Leader of the Opposition (Islwyn, Lab): She constantly emphasizes the value of personal thrift. We were all brought up to respect and practise prudence. If the Prime Minister, after a lifetime of economy or as a consequence of a small occupational pension, were to lose between £1 and £5 a week in housing benefit how would she feel this Christmas?

Mrs Thatcher: He neglects to remember that we are spending £3,400m on housing benefit and that it goes to one household in three. He also neglects to remember that we have one million pensioners who have £1 a week when housing benefit was introduced.

The great majority of those and no one on supplementary benefit will be affected by the changes in housing benefit.

Mr Kinnock: Yet again she refuses to answer the question. Will she admit that the reason for the rise in social security expenditure is almost entirely attributable to the demographic change which has resulted in more pensioners and the vast increase in unemployment and under-employment as a result of her economic policies?

How would she feel if, for no other reason than the degradation of the Government and obedience to unrealistic spending targets, she was to lose between £1 and £5 a week

households. It is not government money; it comes from those who are already providing for their own housing costs and are often having to provide a housing benefit for other Mr Nigel Spearing (Newham South, Lab) Whatever happens in Calcutta, the responsibility for the sick, disabled and handicapped in Newham is for the Newham health authority. The Government is cutting funds available to that authority by nearly £500,000 next year. How does she reconcile that action with her well-advised view to be like Mother Theresa?

Mrs Thatcher: He does not accurately respect the question, but I do not expect him to do so. The last Labour Government actually reduced provision for the NHS in real terms in two of the five years they were in office. We are not going to accept a lecture from them. (Conservative cheer.)

Dr David Owen, leader of the SDP, (Plymouth Devonport): Fifteen million people in this country - on official figures - will be living at or below the poverty line this Christmas. Will she, if the economy improves next year, make a new year resolution that she will tax cut by increasing child benefit?

If she was to concentrate a 1p reduction in the standard rate of child benefit, that would increase the half average family earnings by £3.90. If she concentrated on tax allowances it would only increase by 2p. And if she did it through the standard rate it would increase by only a miserable 35p.

Nice gesture if CND had cancelled

It would have been a nice gesture if CND had cancelled a demonstration held shortly after the Harrods bombing, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, the Prime Minister, said during question time when she expressed sympathy for the bereaved.

Mr Timothy Eggar (Enfield North, C) said: The public has been immensely reassured by the increased number of police on the streets in central London over the last few days. On Tuesday CND deliberately decided to stage a public demonstration, taking a number of police officers away from street patrols.

Mr Owen: The country and this House have expected at this time slightly more responsible action to be taken by CND?

Mrs Thatcher: We would all like, especially at Christmas time, to place on record our thanks for the bravery and courage of the police, and particularly to remember those families who will not have a loved one with them this Christmas because of the bombing.

I agree with him. I think it would have been a nice gesture if those who had planned demonstrations and cancelled them in favour of fighting terrorism.

£ note may be retained

Mrs Margaret Thatcher, the Prime Minister, said during questions that the pound coin was not popular and she had reason to believe the pound note would be retained.

She agreed with Mr Marcus Fox (Shipley, C) who asked: Should we take time during the recess to consider my adjournment debate this week regarding keeping the pound coin? Let me know only as a last resort should the pound coin be universally introduced.

Subsidy of £13,000 for each man

SHIPBUILDING

Workers at British Shipbuilders' Scot Lithgow yard on the Lower Clyde were subsidized by the British taxpayer at the rate of £13,000 per man per year, compared with an average for subsidy in merchant shipping per employee per year of £1,000, Mrs Thatcher, the Prime Minister, said in the Commons.

She told Mr Thomas Clarke (Middlesbrough, Lab), who had urged her to save the taxpayers the cost of paying for workers on the Clyde: There will be no Government intervention. It will be a tragedy if people go on strike, thereby doing themselves out of jobs, because shipbuilding orders are very difficult to get. There is a great deal of competition for them in the world.

It is a tragedy if people strike themselves out of jobs at difficult times. This Government has already shown how much it is prepared to do for shipbuilding. Since 1979, British shipbuilders have received some £850m of taxpayers' money, and merchant shipbuilding has been

subsidized by £6,000 per job per year.

Mr Norman Godman (Greenock and Port Glasgow, Lab), a former shipyard worker, who later raised the matter on an adjournment debate, said the Prime Minister had agreed to see him on this vital matter early in the New Year. His community depended more heavily on shipbuilding and marine engineering than any other in mainland Britain.

In both human and financial costs it would be better for Scot Lithgow to complete the British's order for the semi-submersible drilling rig which Britoil had cancelled. Cancellation spelled economic and social disaster for Inverclyde, and prospects for further orders would be bleak. The company's customer interest in the tough marketplace would be very low. How could it survive the humiliation of losing this contract? Closure of the yard would be inevitable despite the false optimism shown by Mr Norman Lamont, Minister of State for Trade and Industry in the House on Tuesday.

Undeniably, Scot Lithgow had suffered from management problems. There had been woeful inadequacies in project management. But he readily acknowledged failures in industrial relations on both sides. But workers had made significant improvements recently in productivity and quality.

It would appear (he said) that the

Government is quite willing, indeed eager, to ignore these improvements and to disregard the positive response of the shipyard workers to come together with the management to hammer out an agreement on job flexibility and interchangeability.

He found the indifference and even hostility of some Government

about £96m. Cancellation penalties and costs vis-a-vis suppliers and sub-contractors would take the figure to over £100m.

The Government's indifference was creating in Scotland a Scottish underclass of ex-miners and their children, ex-textile workers and their children and ex-smelter workers and their children.

Mr John Butcher, Under Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, agreed this was a dreadful crisis, distressing and depressing. Conservatives were not indifferent to the huge social implications of it, but there had been bad working practices.

Legal proceedings instituted between British Shipbuilders and Britoil's agents meant that he could not discuss in detail the merits and demerits of what was a contractual dispute. The issue between the two parties was sub judice.

Since nationalization, the Government had subsidized each job at Scot Lithgow up to £25,000 per job. That was not indifference. Now (he said) we find our justifications becoming thinner and thinner by the day.

Talking about closure would be premature. Two other vessels were being built in the yard. But cancellation would bring large scale job losses.

It was ironic that the workforce had shown no signs of resisting the call for national industrial action made by the shipbuilding union leadership.

Godman: Closure of yard is inevitable

ministers to management and workers deeply disturbing. If the Secretary of State for Scotland could not persuade his ministerial colleagues to intervene, he should resign.

The total cost of cancellation and closure, including redundancy payments, social security benefits, repayments to Britoil, would be

Fortress policy not folly

FALKLANDS

There must be a change of policy over the Falkland Islands because Britain could not go on allowing its resources to be drained away, Mr William Hamilton (Fife, Central, Lab) said during a Commons debate on the Fortress Falklands policy.

He said the cost of the policy involved mind numbing figures over £15m every week up to 1985-86 to defend the rights of 1800 folk about whom successive governments had expressed no great interest. It worked out at about £15m per head.

Even the Chancellor of the Exchequer was worried about the

enormous bills being presented to pay for the Falklands folly. The Government should swallow its pride and begin to talk with the new Argentine Government.

Mr Raymond Whitney, Under Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, said it was not the Government's choice to develop a Falklands fortress policy. Adequate defence was forced on them by the action of the Argentine military junta in April 1982.

I do not think (he said) we can be feckless and profligate in the defence of the important principles of freedom. It was not the Falklands folly. It was the Falklands rescue operation which was necessary.

US visit questioned

COMPUTERS

Following criticism by backbencher MPs, Mr John Biffen, Lord Privy Seal and Leader of the House, withdrew a motion which would have enabled members of the House of Commons Services Committee to visit legislative assemblies in Washington and Ottawa.

Mr Tony Banks (Newham North West, Lab) said that in local government visits would have been a junket, though he was sure it was not. There would be headlines in the local newspapers about the cost to ratepayers.

The motion, which would allow the committee to take evidence

outside the United Kingdom for the remainder of the present session, was expected to have been approved automatically but Mr Enoch Powell (Down South, OUP) rose to seek reasons for what he said was a change of considerable importance in the standing order.

There were precedents for the taking of evidence outside the realm by select committees, but for the most part these had been restricted to British institutions or other inquiries outside the realm.

Mr Biffen said the computer sub-committee of the House of Commons Services Committee wanted the opportunity of examining the use made by computers in the legislative assemblies of other countries.

Foreign buyers put expensive houses back in fashion

Butlin is seen as a prospective "bolt hole" by rich foreigners, according to Knight, Frank and Rutley, the international property consultants and estate agents.

Partly because of that interest, 1983 has seen larger houses come back in fashion, Mr Bill Yates, a partner, says. Well located expensive houses, many of them on the market for up to two years, have sold, and during the year the firm has sold a number of well-known houses for more than £1m, two for more than £2m.

Such houses are mainly, but not exclusively, sold to foreigners. At these levels, overseas

buyers outbid the British", he states. The reason for such foreign interest, he believes, is that Britain is perceived as a country with good prospects for political and economic stability.

"Rich people throughout the world like to hedge their bets. A personal investment in Britain is a reasonable bet. To some it is a prospective 'bolt hole' no doubt backed by a substantial Swiss bank account. To those who can afford to buy, maintain and use a substantial house, which is also a work of art, this country is well stocked", Mr Yates says.

A few years ago, such buyers were always Arabs, and

although they continue to be important, they have been joined by Chinese, Japanese, people from some South American and African countries, and some North Americans.

Mr Yates, writing in the firm's annual review, points out that there is also evidence that more British citizens are prepared to buy larger houses and take on commitments to extensive gardens.

Overseas buyers have been active, too, in buying expensive London houses. Mr Peter Kearon, a partner in Knight, Frank and Rutley, estimates that there has been a 20 per cent increase in prices for this sector.



Dr Brian Richards arriving at Heathrow airport yesterday.

GLC to support minority arts at Roundhouse

London's Roundhouse theatre is to become Britain's first black community arts centre with the aid of a £330,000 grant from the Greater London Council.

The GLC and Camden council are expected to agree early next year on the revenue needed to run the centre. A GLC spokesman was unable to predict yesterday how much money it would require, but said that an approach to the Arts Council for support was expected.

The Roundhouse closed earlier this year because of a cash shortage. The former railway turntable shed in Camden had established itself as one of London's leading fringe venues.

The GLC's arts and recreation committee has put aside £330,000 for vital repairs and conversion work. An independent trust, on which GLC and Camden councillors will sit, is to be established to run the venture.

Mr Peter Pitt, chairman of the GLC ethnic arts subcommittee, said yesterday: "It is heartening to see the plans for a black arts centre coming nearer to fruition. I hope we shall not have to wait long to see a permanent venue for the rich and varied cultural traditions of the black community."

No opening date has been suggested, but it could find itself confronted with a financial crisis almost immediately if the GLC is abolished as the Government itself.

The Roundhouse was built by Robert Stephenson in 1847 as a railway shed, and later served as a wine store and factory. It became a theatre in the 1960s.

The building has been the venue for several artistic exercises. In 1971, a performance of *Rabelais* was stopped by two naked men who described its directors as bourgeois thieves.

Policeman jailed over £1,000 bribe

James Thomas, aged 51, a police inspector, was jailed yesterday for obtaining a £1,000 bribe from a restaurant owner who needed help with a drinks licence case.

Bristol Crown Court was told that apart from losing his freedom, Thomas, who had 27 years' service in the city force, would lose his police house, £24,000 pay-out on retirement and a £100 a week pension.

Thomas was sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment, half of it suspended, after being found guilty of two corruption charges and one of incitement to attempt to pervert the course of justice. He had denied the allegations.

His daughter, Mrs Jill Williams, said after the verdict that since her father's arrest, her mother and sister had attempted suicide.

Accused doctor returns

Dr Brian (Dick) Richards, the sex therapy specialist, who is accused of plotting to murder his Harley Street partner, Dr Peter Stephens, flew into Heathrow airport yesterday from Los Angeles.

Earlier, he had attended a five-minute court hearing when his bail was reduced from £255,000 (£367,000) to £200,000.

Dr Richards, who has refused to spend Christmas with his family, said: "I think it is becoming obvious that someone has made a nasty mistake."

"The judge has substantially reduced my bail and I think this is indicative of the way the whole thing is going. It is

Languages plea by teachers

By Lucy Hodges Education Correspondent

Secondary school headteachers have criticized, like many other educational bodies, they say that the document is seriously flawed.

One of the main criticisms of the Secondary Heads Association, which represents 3,200 of the 5,000 heads in England and Wales, is that *Foreign Languages at the School Curriculum* does not mention the curriculum as a whole.

"A government that expects the curriculum to consist wholly of courses examined to present standards at 16-plus, and to include three separate sciences, cannot be surprised if the second foreign language disappears," the association says in its response to the Department of Education and Science.

It proposes that the dominance of French be countered by the introduction of foundation courses in two languages. That would also expose the inappropriateness for most pupils of the present O level and CSE system.

"We believe that one of two foreign languages should be taught to all pupils, to an appropriate and recognized foundation standard, as part of their secondary education."

The alternative, of limiting such teaching to pupils of a certain ability range, is likely to be counterproductive in terms of the perceived 'difficulty' of the subject concerned and is known to be divisive in terms of the remainder of the curriculum.

The headteachers say that the consultative paper gives scant emphasis to the effect of the examination system on pupil motivation and that the improvements urged (in the increased use of foreign language assistants, for example) are becoming less possible because of spending cuts.

Rival air route may close Prestwick

By Michael Baily, Transport Editor

Scotland's international airport at Prestwick may face closure because of official approval for direct services between Glasgow and New York.

The Civil Aviation Authority decision yesterday to approve a British Midland service out of Glasgow marks an important change in Scottish aviation policy and was described by Mr Norman Payne, the British Airports Authority chairman, as "flying in the face of common sense."

His organization, which runs both airports and opposed the British Midland application at a public hearing in November, is to appeal against the decision, which could well mean an extra £10m investment at Glasgow, and the waste of £25m spent at Prestwick, Mr Payne said.

British Midland which argued that Prestwick on the Ayrshire coast a too far away to serve Glasgow effectively and that the distance was diverting flights from Scotland, proposes to operate a 350-seat DC10 between Manchester and New York with calls at Glasgow. The flight will run five times a week in summer and four in winter at fares roughly comparable to existing Atlantic fares.

Mr Michael Bishop, British Midland chairman, said he was "especially pleased" at the Glasgow designation.

And added that the airline would seek direct flights from Manchester to New York along with revocation of British Airways' licence for the route, unused for three years. British Airways says it will consider restarting in 1985.

Youth accused of making bomb hoax call

A car wash attendant from west London accused of making a hoax telephone call about a bomb in Selfridges store, Oxford Street, was made the subject of an "unruly order" by Hammersmith Juvenile Court yesterday. That means he can be detained for up to eight days.

The youth, aged 16, had denied the accusation. Mrs Noelle Mendelsohn, chairman of the bench told the youth he would go to a remand centre for one week, pending reports.

Village votes for death pill in nuclear war

By a Staff Reporter

People of a West Country village have voted by nearly four to one in favour of a suggestion by their local doctor that they should be able to hand out "suicide pills" in a nuclear war.

The villagers of Congresbury, near Weston-super-Mare, Somerset, decided by 62 votes to 16 at a public meeting in favour of Dr Richard Lawson, aged 37, giving out lethal doses of morphine before an imminent nuclear attack.

Dr Lawson, a member of the Medical Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons, said he had called the meeting because some of his patients would stab, shoot or strangle their children rather than allow them to suffer the effects of radiation after a nuclear conflict.

Candlestick find

A pair of silver candlesticks, valued at £2,000, stolen from Cirencester parish church, in Gloucestershire, four months ago, have been found in a copse a few miles away.



## Arafat-Mubarak talks raise hopes for revived US peace plan

From Nicholas Ashford, Washington

The interlocking fighting within the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), culminating in this week's evacuation of Mr Yasser Arafat and 4,000 of his fighters from Lebanon, has raised hopes in Washington that President Reagan's Middle East peace initiative can be revived early in the new year.

US officials said they were extremely encouraged by yesterday's meeting between the PLO leader and President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt. Relations between Mr Arafat and Egypt have been under severe strain since the 1979 Camp David accord.

US officials are hoping the PLO leader will hold talks soon with King Hussein of Jordan and give him the green light to enter negotiations with Egypt and Israel on Palestine autonomy.

The Americans regard an acceptance by King Hussein to join the negotiations on behalf of Jordan and the Palestinians as an essential first step towards implementation of Mr Reagan's September 1982 peace initiative.

If Jordan agrees to participate then, according to the official view in Washington, Israel will be forced to reconsider its rejection of the Reagan plan.

The President's peace plan calls for the establishment of a self-governing Palestinian state

in the West Bank and Gaza "in association with Jordan."

Earlier this year King Hussein held talks with Mr Arafat about the possibility of forming a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to negotiate the future of the occupied territories on the basis of the Reagan plan.

However, Mr Arafat refused to give King Hussein the necessary go-ahead, as a result, the US initiative has been on ice for the past eight months.

King Hussein has made it clear all along he would agree to participate in the negotiations only if he had the backing of the Palestinians and "moderate" Arab states.

Mr Arafat's refusal to support him last April was largely due to the influence of Syria, which is strongly opposed to the Reagan plan. However, Syria has now lost that influence ever Mr Arafat because of its support for PLO rebels during the recent fighting in Tripoli.

American officials concede they are uncertain how much influence Mr Arafat retains over the now deeply divided PLO. However, they believe he still enjoys the support of a majority of Palestinians living in the occupied territories and that he will continue to be recognized formally as the PLO leader by most Arab countries.

Mr Kamal Hassaa Ali, the Egyptian Foreign Minister, who

held talks with President Reagan on Wednesday, said Egypt still considered Mr Arafat the most popular Palestinian leader. We also agreed with the American assessment that the evacuation from Lebanon had opened the way for a new "political approach" to the Middle East problem.

If Mr Arafat were now to give King Hussein the go-ahead to join negotiations with Egypt and Israel then, it is hoped in Washington, the Jordanian ruler could obtain the necessary Arab backing at a planned summit meeting of the Arab League in Saudi Arabia on March 31.

However, US officials say it is still far too early to predict with any confidence what will happen in the weeks ahead. But they feel that the latest events in Tripoli have presented the United States with a new opportunity which they intend to exploit diplomatically.

### 30,000 greetings

Washington (AFP) - More than 30,000 letters and Christmas cards to Lieutenant Robert Goodman, a US Navy pilot held prisoner by Syria since his plane was shot down on December 4, have been delivered to the congressional building here.

## France and US given deadline in Beirut

Beirut (Reuters) - The Islamic Jihad organization yesterday claimed responsibility for Wednesday's bombing attack here and warned French troops and US marines to withdraw within 10 days.

The organization made the claim and issued the warning in an anonymous call to a foreign news agency. A French soldier and at least 10 Lebanese civilians died from the blast.

The male caller told the agency that his group would "cause a real earthquake" under the feet of French and US troops of the multinational peacekeeping force in Beirut unless they pulled out within the specified period.

The Islamic Jihad is believed to be a fundamentalist group with ties in Iran.

The force of the blast, estimated to have been caused by a ton of explosives packed into the lobby shock Beirut and many thought the capital had been hit by an earthquake. An apartment building collapsed from the explosion.

Islamic Jihad has claimed responsibility for most attacks on French and US troops since they arrived in September, 1982 including the two suicide bomb raids on October 23 which killed 241 American servicemen and 58 French troops.

On Wednesday a hitherto unknown group calling itself the Black Hand telephoned the Phalangist Voice of Lebanon radio station claiming responsibility for the latest attack.

It was revealed in Paris yesterday that France, whose forces in Lebanon were the main target on Wednesday night, is to begin delivery soon of a big arms shipment to the Lebanese Army, including 100 tanks and 10 combat and transport helicopters. This will dramatically increase the strength of the Lebanese Army, which is closely identified with Lebanon's ruling Christians, whom the bombers and their supporters hope to destabilize.

The AMX 13 light tanks have 90 mm guns, while Gazelle helicopters on order will be fitted with anti-tank missiles. The Puma troop-carrying helicopters could also carry cannon and machine guns.

WASHINGTON: Mr Casper Weinberger, the Defence Secretary, said yesterday that the United States had tried in vain to get other countries to join the four-nations multinational peacekeeping force. Since the force was formed last August, 18 countries had been asked to join and 15 had declined.

Mr Weinberger did not name the countries that had rejected the request. The United States has 1,800 Marines in the existing force, Italy 2,100 troops, France 2,000 and Britain 100.

Asked about Italy's decision to reduce its force by 1,000 men, Mr Weinberger said that this would only reduce its contribution to the original figure committed last year.

## Earthquake kills 10

Dakar, Senegal (AP) - At least 10 people were killed and an unknown number of others injured yesterday by a powerful earthquake in Guinea, West Africa, according to Guinea state radio.

The earthquake registered 6.3 on the Richter scale, according to US geological scientists in Golden, Colorado. They said the earthquake occurred at 4.11am and its epicentre was 100 miles north-west of Labe.

## A fanatical 'family' to rival the Mafia

By A Special Correspondent

Whenever Mr Hussein Mussawi - the man widely believed to have been behind the kamikaze attacks on American and French establishments in Lebanon and Kuwait - has sensitive information to communicate to his backers in Tehran, he finds it convenient to have his cousin and boyhood companion, Mr Mohsen Mussawi, occupying the post of First Secretary at the Iranian Embassy in Beirut.

The two men are equally Lebanese and Iranian as a result of their upbringing and family links in the two countries. They are part of an extensive family network of Shia clerics with branches all over the Middle East, as well as nowadays among immigrants and diplomats from North Korea to New York.

In Tehran, distant relatives but fellow-believers include Mr Hossein Mussawi, the Prime Minister, and even Ayatollah Khomeini himself, though the bulk of the two men's business is done with a second-rank cleric, Seyyed Mehdi Hashemi, in charge of the Foreign Ministry's Department for Liberation Movements - more informally referred to as the Department for the Export of the Revolution.

Mr Hashemi was wanted under the Shah's regime for the abduction and murder of a moderate mullah, Ayatollah Shams-Abadi, of Isfahan. Now he supervises the ideological and military training of foreign Muslim militants, or "Islamic students".

Defecting Iranian diplomats have told *The Times* that he has set up secret fundamentalist organizations in many countries, including the "Liberation Organization of Islamic Tunisia", and even the "Egyptian Unity and Holy Struggle Organization", whose members assassinated President Sadat.

He is said to be devoting most of his time to the Arab countries of the Gulf, such as Kuwait and Bahrain, whose governments support Iraq's war effort against Iran.

Each week dozens of boats cross the Gulf from Iran to these states under the cover of darkness, carrying smugglers, illegal immigrants, political refugees and some trained saboteurs.

Kuwait has about 25,000 legal Iranian residents and a further 55,000 illegal ones. There are also many influential Kuwaiti families of Iranian origin, many of whom identify with non-Arab Iran, whatever the colour of its Government.

Three months ago, one such Kuwaiti-Iranian, Mr Hussein Makki, was arrested on suspicion of fomenting religious unrest. A prompt Iranian warning to the Government of Kuwait secured his release.

What is new in the extensive network of Shia clerical families outside Iran is the resort to suicidal terrorism reminiscent of their eleventh-century forebears, the Assassins. Another novelty is the increasing number of militants from the Sunni branch of Islam making political alliances with Ayatollah Khomeini's followers among the Shia.

In many a Western capital, including Washington and London, young Palestinians, Syrians and North Africans, carefully cultivating a scruffy "Islamic" appearance, gather nightly in houses run with Iranian Government money, repetitively chanting slogans in adulation of "the Imam" for many hours at a time. No TV sets or Western newspapers are allowed.

## UN force 'Lebanon's best alternative'

From Zoriana Pysariwsky, New York

Amid reports that the idea of replacing the multinational force in Beirut with United Nations troops is being mooted in Washington, Señor Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, the Secretary-General, again stated that the UN offered the best alternative for peacekeeping in Lebanon.

In a UN press conference, he said that some of the difficulties encountered by the multinational force troops would be escaped by the UN force since their presence around Beirut would require a broad base of support, including approval from all the

parties in the conflict. Their international stamp would make them less likely to be identified with one side in the dispute.

The UN peacekeepers would also serve under a unified command. Their mandate to carry out light defensive arms would reduce their risk of attack, since the sanctity of their mission would be undisputable.

The Secretary-General also delivered one of his sternest lectures to the United States and the Soviet Union for their confrontational nuclear stand-

## Kremlin cracks down on corruption

Moscow (Reuters) - The Kremlin, less than a week before a key meeting of its Central Committee, yesterday gave warning that party members were expected to produce results if they hoped to remain in positions of power.

In the second attack in a week on the leadership on the republic of Moldavia, *Pravda* published a front-page leading article, saying that a decisive about-turn was needed.

Although the Moldavian party was criticized for inefficiency in a government decree only seven days ago, *Pravda* made it clear that the Kremlin had expected, and not seen, an immediate response.

"An essential improvement in the style of working has not occurred," it said.

Another report gave warning that sinecures were a thing of the past, restating the tough disciplinary line of President

Andropov and appearing to indicate that he was still firmly in control.

He is expected to make his first public appearance in four months at next week's meeting of the Communist Party's Central Committee of Supreme Soviet, the country's parliament.

The attack on Moldavia, which lies between the Ukraine and Romania, have been interpreted by some diplomats as attempts by Andropov supporters to discredit allies of former President Brezhnev.

One of those, Mr Konstantin Chernenko, thought to have been Mr Andropov's rival for the party leadership, occupied senior posts in Moldavia in the 1950s and maintained close links with the area.

Other diplomats, however, said they thought the attacks were intended more as a warning against sloppy ad-

ministration, bureaucracy and smugness.

"The most important thing is not the holding of meetings and the adoption of numerous resolutions, but the knowledge of how to organize things practically," the *Pravda* article said.

A report from Novosibirsk on regional party meetings, held in advance of elections to local administrative bodies, contained a clear criticism of complacency. "Platform speakers noted that a few comrades were obviously well-used to a soft job," it said.

The regional party elections, as always a one-candidate choice, could be an opportunity for Andropov supporters to take control at the grass-roots level.

One of the innovations of the Andropov era has been an end to the habit under Brezhnev of almost never seriously threatening the position of an official

who had reached senior rank.

Mr Andropov's line has been to insist on "personal responsibility", a phrase repeated in yesterday's attack, with senior officials being criticized because of errors made at the lower levels of their departments.

Under Brezhnev, a more likely scenario was for a junior official to be made a scapegoat for a mistake higher up. An indication of how seriously the leadership regards the Moldavian party misdeeds will come at the Central Committee meeting when the local party chief, Mr Semyon Grossu, will be called to account.

Moldavia is a small republic with a population of about four million, ethnically and culturally linked to neighbouring Romania, of which it was once a part.

Both *Pravda* articles emphasized the need to improve the everyday living standards

## The 'sniffer planes' scandal Giscard defends failed oil venture



M Valéry d'Estaing: An experiment "in the national interest"

apparently far-fetched project, but also why a report by the State Audit Court was destroyed.

M Bernard Beck, aged 70, president of the court at the time but now in retirement,

he had "lacerated" the report, "even though the court is not the Ministry of Defence". This statement lends strength to reports that the promoters of the electronic system had claimed it would detect nuclear submarines and uranium, as well as oil.

Among the promoters are a Belgian named as Baron Alain de Villegas de Saint-Pierre, an Italian technician, named as Signor Aldo Bonassoli, and a lawyer, M Jean Violet. They and their associates appear to have persuaded both the Swiss Bank and the French oil company Elf Erap of the invention's many merits.

In May, 1976, Elf Erap signed a contract with the Panamanian company Fisalm for further development of the system. The following year, Elf Erap got a new chief executive, M Albin Chalandon. When told in secret of the airborne detecting system M Chalandon was sceptical. In 1980, the company cancelled the contract.

## Outlawed Turks bare teeth

From Rasit Gurdilek, Ankara

A concerted campaign to discredit Mr Turgut Ozal's monetarist, anti-inflationary programme has been launched by the burgeoning conservative and social democratic parties barred by the military from Turkey's new civilian Parliament.

In Parliament itself, the Opposition has indicated it will vote against the economic reforms but that is hardly a problem for Mr Ozal, the Prime Minister, whose Motherland Party commands 211 of the 400 seats.

Mr Ozal is pledged to prevent inflation rising above 10 per cent by the end of his term; end the lingering role of the state in economy; reduce unemployment; and restructure industry.

The Prime Minister, outlining his policies yesterday said that there was "No time to lose".

Indeed he lost no time in decreasing a radical increase in interest rates, to boost them above the current inflation rate

of 40 per cent to encourage savings.

The move had an immediate effect and gold prices and the blackmarket value of foreign currencies took a dive Mr Ozal is also expected to lose little time in introducing tax reductions and price increases.

The Prime Minister needs to hasten not only to accomplish what he was promised to do within the next five years, but also just to survive his term. The extra-parliamentary opposition has been getting uncomfortably stronger and hostile since the military regime restored democracy after ruling the country for more than three years.

The conservative Right Way Party, claiming widespread support and enjoying the backing of Mr Süleyman Demirel, the former Prime Minister, who was banned from politics for 10 years, has been particularly active in showing its force.

Almost immediately after the nomination of Mr Ozal for the

## Storm breaks in Canada over Eagleburger jibe

From John Best, Ottawa

A tempest has broken over some unkind remarks about the Canadian Prime Minister, Mr Pierre Trudeau, attributed to the American Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Mr Lawrence Eagleburger.

Mr Eagleburger, known for his plain talk and colourful turns of phrase, was quoted in yesterday's Canadian newspapers as saying that Mr Trudeau's so-called peace initiative "something akin to pot-induced behaviour by an erratic leftist".

The comment was carried by the Canadian Press news agency. It was said to have been made by Mr Eagleburger at a private meeting about three weeks ago.

Within hours of the report appearing in print yesterday, the United States Embassy here put out a statement almost - but not quite - denying its authenticity.

The statement said that Mr Eagleburger had asked the embassy to say that the reports of his comments were "grossly distorted".

## Russians reject Ottawa's claim over Korean jet

From Our Correspondent Ottawa

The Soviet Union has refused to accept Canada's \$Can2.1m (£1.2m) claim for compensation for the families of eight Canadians killed when a Soviet fighter shot down the South Korean airliner over Sakhalin island on September 1.

Mr Alexey Rodionov, the Soviet Ambassador, was called to the External Affairs Department to be informed of the claim. He refused to accept delivery of a formal diplomatic Note.



Instant wealth: Four nurses in Bilbao celebrate after learning that their ticket has won a prize in the lottery.

## 'The Fat One' works its annual miracle

From Harry Debelius Madrid

"The Fat One" worked his annual miracle in Spain yesterday, turning paupers into rich men and fulfilling the Christmas dreams of Spaniards all over the country.

"The Fat One," as the Spaniards affectionately dub

their huge annual Christmas lottery, filled the pockets of thousands of Barcelona's poorer people, bestowed unimagined wealth on customers of a lottery shop in Bilbao, wrecked in this year's floods, and later reopened, and gave the country's legislators an unexpected payoff.

More than one-third of the

£239m in prizes went to Barcelona and surrounding areas. The first prize and four other big prizes went there.

Inhabitants of the poor neighbourhood near the Felipe II market in Barcelona got a bonanza. Merchants had distributed tiny shares of ticket number 53,288 as a Christmas gift among their customers.

The number came up and a share of only 11p on that number became worth £1,000.

In the old quarter of Bilbao, families affected by floods had the consolation of £25m.

Employees of the Spanish Parliament, as well as some MPs, held lucky numbers.

## Senegal puts death toll in rioting at 24

From Susan Macdonald, Dakar, Senegal

The official death toll during last Sunday's riots in the southern Casamance area of Senegal has risen to 24, although eye-witnesses speak of the number of dead being perhaps four times that figure.

The bloodshed was the result of a march on the provincial capital, Ziguinchor, by the Casamance separatist movement, which is agitating for independence from the rest of Senegal.

The police had previous information on the planned march and are reported to have had orders to deal with it firmly. They had taken up positions in the city in the early hours of Sunday morning, and there are reports that they opened fire on the approaching demonstrators, said officially to

## Swiss jail spy linked to S Africa case

From Alan McGregor Geneva

Caught red-handed in an espionage contact assignment, Mikhail Vasilievich Nicolaiev, aged 49, believed to be a Soviet military intelligence officer, was sentenced to three years' imprisonment in Zurich yesterday after a trial in camera.

He was charged with espionage to the prejudice of another country - South Africa - and with carrying two American passports giving him different identities as Ronald Vincent Miskell, alias Dale Paul Nelson. The court said that his identity had not been established.

The sentence was the maximum in Swiss law for this form of espionage. His lawyer said an appeal would be lodged.



## EEC plays a waiting game to trim its farm budget by £100m

From Ian Murray, Brussels

Measures to cut the cost of the common agricultural policy were announced yesterday by the European Commission. They are meant to save about £100m from next year's £1,000m agricultural budget.

The Commission is using its management powers to delay payment for produce which it buys at the EEC's fixed intervention prices. In the case of milk for instance, dairies will be paid a minimum of four months after delivery, rather than the present two-month gap.

This delay, it is hoped, will force the dairies to try to unload their milk to buyers prepared to pay quickly. In turn, this will put more milk on the market and force down the price, making it less profitable for farmers to produce.

Delaying tactics are also being used on other products, notably cereals, where payments will take three months instead of two. The Commission expects similar results, though they are difficult to quantify at this stage.

Part of the savings from the 1984 budget will be nominal because money will have to be paid eventually from the 1985

budget. In the same way, about £210m frozen in payments from this year's budget, will have to be paid next year.

British farmers will emerge comparatively unscathed by the present package. A freeze on beef livestock premiums will not apply because Britain is the only country where beef producers receive their cash on the carcass, rather than on the number of head.

Sheep farmers will receive the ewe premium which will be paid next year for the last time. The Milk Marketing Board is so big that it will be able to cushion the effects of the delayed payments on dairy farmers.

The commission intends to produce another package early in the new year, which is expected to pare a further £100m from the budget. This will be done by imposing more rigorous quality standards on goods sold into intervention.

Meanwhile, the Council of Ministers is being asked to return to the agricultural reform package rejected at the Athens summit when it next meets on January 9. The Commission says agreement is the minimum

required to provide essential savings.

● **Ban lifted:** The EEC has decided to drop economic sanctions imposed on the Soviet Union over martial law in Poland (AP reports).

"None of the member countries wanted to renew the sanctions in 1984, so they will lapse on New Year's Day," a spokesman said, on the understanding he would not be identified. "There will be no formal announcement. The measures will just die quietly," he said.

The last meeting of the commission which could have proposed a renewal of the sanctions - a ban on certain Soviet imports - ended on Wednesday night without action.

The official said the 10 member countries decided the restrictions had served their purpose. EEC officials initially proposed a ban on Russian imports worth about £270m a year, but the list was watered down by member states to 60 products, representing about £94m a year.

## Season of ill will and ingenuity: From Warsaw to Wall Street



Not the Harrods store: Shoppers bargain hunting in Buenos Aires at Harrods, a shop unconnected with the London store of the same name.

## Santa dead drunk in the snow

From Roger Boyes, Warsaw

Christmas in Poland, or at least its secular celebration, has traditionally fallen into two distinct phases. The first is a concentrated week of commercial ill-will during which sales staff scale new unimagined heights of rudeness and shoppers try their best, if necessary, by hiring babies or gangs of pensioners, to edge their way to the head of the queues.

The second phase is a period of abnormally high alcohol consumption. Drunken Father Christmas lurch through the streets, men lie motionless in the snow and vodka flows like well, vodka.

This year Christmas Phase Two will be different. In a protest against the Government, thousands of Poles are renouncing vodka in solemn oaths sworn in church.

A number of Warsaw churches, Poles, mainly intellectuals and students but also workers, have been gathering to hear sermons

that mix an anti-alcoholic message with strong national sentiments and more than a trace of sympathy for Solidarity, a clearly political cocktail.

After the sermon and prayers, a pledge is read out: "Taking God and society as my witness, in the service of the Fatherland, of man's dignity and liberation and committed to an end to repression and hatred, I solemnly swear sobriety and renounce vodka during the period of the Jubilee Holy Year. So help me God."

That is the pledge encouraged by the Catholic church leadership. But many priests and a few lay Catholic activists have given the oath a sharper edge. The expanded oaths of abstinence explicitly link the commitment to abandon vodka with the commitment to campaign for the release of political prisoners.

The logic of the campaign is that the Government is both

trying to sap the national will and earn revenue out of human weakness. "Our fate, the fate of the nation, is being decided now. For the society to regain its rights, let us give up our weakness. Let us reject evil to gain strength." Thus goes one of the more political pledges.

Every day one in 10 Polish workers is estimated to be drunk on the job.

It is easier to control a drunken nation than a sober one, let's not make it any easier for them," says one Warsaw University lecturer who has signed the oath.

But the sacrifice is not as large as it at first seems. The oath runs only until the end of Holy Year, that is until Easter. Moreover, there is no question of total abstinence - only vodka, the political symbol, is involved.

On the Warsaw black market yesterday, vodka was still doing swift business.

## Peru guerrillas break truce

By Colin Harding

The assassination in Lima of a police general appears to be a further escalation of the campaign of urban terrorism by the Peruvian guerrilla organization, Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path), which has produced dozens of attacks in the capital since mid-October. General Carlos Herrera, head of the plainclothes branch training school, is the most senior officer to be killed in Peru's three-and-a-half-year old guerrilla war. His death must cast serious doubts on reports this week that Sendero Luminoso had declared a two-year truce in its heartland of Ayacucho, in the south-central Andes.

A few hours before the shooting of General Herrera, the Interior Minister, Señor Luis Péroovich, had announced the capture by the police of Antonio Diaz Martinez, one of Sendero's leading ideologists, and believed by the authorities to be one of the top five in the guerrillas' command structure.

A former agronomy lecturer at San Cristobal de Huamanga university in Ayacucho, Señor Diaz Martinez spent two years in China before returning to Peru in 1977 and going underground. He was said to have been arrested in Huaraz, in the highlands of Ancash, several hundred miles north of Ayacucho.

If the identity of Señor Diaz Martinez is confirmed, his capture will be the security forces' biggest coup so far against the guerrillas. His wife, Catalina Adrianzen, also a leading senderista, was captured two years ago, and is reported to have suffered a complete mental collapse in prison.

The blacking out of Lima for the sixth time in 18 months earlier this week suggests that Sendero's operational capacity is unimpaired, despite official claims that the guerrillas are on the run. The security forces have badly needed some favourable publicity, since re-

ports emerged in mid-November that 32 peasants, including several young children, had been killed by soldiers and counter-insurgency police units, in Soccos, Ayacucho.

After laying the blame for the slaughter on the guerrillas, the military commander in Ayacucho, General Clemente Noel, agreed to open an official inquiry into reports by survivors that his troops had been involved. This was the first official admission that the security forces might have been responsible for any of the hundreds of atrocities and "disappearances" in the Andean guerrilla zone.

Killings have continued unabated in the rural emergency zone, and last month two more provinces, Lucanas and Huancavelica, were put under General Noel's overall command, bringing the total to 11. The general claims that Sendero is being driven out towards the periphery of its heartland.

## Christmas in America

## Jingle bells and mounds of dollars

A man's fondness for litigation, I once read, may be taken as evidence that he is a crackpot. Welcome to America, where litigation, encouraged by a glut of lawyers, is a national pastime, and the courts echo to plaintiff cries and the slap of writs.

The season of goodwill brings its own crop of bitter legal battles. Consider, for example, the fierce argument, rendering the town of Pawtucket, which stands on the Seekonk river, in Rhode Island. The Supreme Court itself is sitting in judgment in this matter.

The trouble has been ignited by the local council's nativity tableau, which has figures of Joseph, Mary, the swaddled Christ, a dancing elephant in a short skirt, a chipmunk and Santa on a snowmobile. (It is, after all, an American nativity scene).

The American Civil Liberties Union pursued its lips at this and sought a court order preventing the council paying for the tableau with public money. It cites the constitutional insistence on separation of church and state and contends that the council's manger scene is an illegal endorsement of religion.

The God-fearing Reagan Administration has sided with the outraged council, but the National Council of Churches has not. Indeed, some clergymen have signed a statement saying you can have Santa on the rates, but not Jesus. A cleric who expressed this view on television was telephoned by a man who said "If you spoil my kid's Christmas I'll blow your head off."

Another Christmas lawsuit, in New Orleans, concerns Mr. A. Copeland, owner of Popeye's, a fried chicken chain. The poignant part of the story is that he was once a poor boy who decided that when he grew up and became rich he would do as the local wealthy man did and decorate his mansion lavishly at Christmas.

He prospered on fried chicken and today his mansion has 250,000 fairy lights, an 18ft snowman and piped carols. The neighbours, however, do not like the great crowds which flock to see this spectacle and are asking a court to order lights out. Mr. Copeland says his neighbours are grinchy, American for grouches.

Apart from suing each other, Americans are spending money like drunken sailors. It is evidently a record Christmas, and delicious shopkeepers are being dug out from mounds of dollars. This is commerce rampant, in the land of abundance.

Santas are standing outside the great stores ringing handbells, calling the faithful to spend. The mammoth stores of Wall Street are paying each other fat bonuses (top executives are getting up to 25 per cent of their annual salaries), and hurrying to Tiffany's, a surprisingly dull, brown store, where the most expensive stocking filler is a necklace costing £1.4m - though most people settle for the £12 key ring.

Almost next door, on New York's Fifth Avenue, stands the new Trump Tower, a pillar of preposterous decadence and opulence. The doorman are got up in the red tunics and

bearskins, like moonlighting Coldstreamers, a grand piano tinkles in the lobby and a choir of nubile girls carol against the backdrop of a vast rose marble wall which doubles as a Hollywoodian waterfall.

The shops here are the kind that do not have anything so vulgar as price tags. The female assistants are tall and imperious and their lips, coated in cruel lipstick, hover on the brink of a sneer.

You ask the price of a tee-shirt and they say \$38 unblinkingly and without shame, as the colour drains from your face and credit card.

The present for the truly rich and corrupted is a silver dog bowl, engraved "Dog", which Aspreys sell for £1,400. Special Christmas bikkies for the spoilt brute which feeds from it sell for £7. The bikkies makers, of course, are being sued in a lawsuit over the brand-name.

The Cabbage Patch doll craze, which swept the Day After craze from the television screens, has calmed a little and there are fewer reports of shopkeepers being threatened and savaged by crazed mothers. (American parents are intimidated by their children, most of whom grow up to be lawyers).

The inventor of the Cabbage Patch doll, it hardly needs to be said, is being sued for millions by someone who claims he pinched the idea.

In New York, the imperial city, the spending frenzy is especially acute, and Christmas shopping rages unabated all day and much of the evening seven days a week.

## Tomorrow: Christmas in Russia

Charles Dickens, visiting the United States, said "I'm getting sick of the sound of sleigh bells. The extra noise added by crowds, traffic and bells in an already noisy city makes New Yorkers cover their ears like Quasimodos. Suddenly, earplugs are in big demand and earplug vendors are making money. Earplugs could be the next craze."

You can see Santas, carrying sandwiches in brown paper bags, pausing on their way to work to press their noses against store windows. There is much to astonish them. For the man who has everything there are £200 pillows for foot pillows, or, perhaps, a small piece of the spinnaker with which the Americans lost the America's Cup.

It might be thought un-American to sell a souvenir associated with defeat, but the tradition of turning a quick buck prevails, and a spinnaker fragment can be had for £850.

In the land of the telephone hotline there is a champagne hotline you can call to get expert help. If you have champagne worries. And what? Christmas is over psychologists will no doubt be brought on to television to explain to people why they spent so much and how they can cope with their guilt.

Many Christmas gifts will not work properly, but there are plenty of lawyers on hand to help people sue the shopkeepers.

Trevor Fishlock

## Court rules angels must have wings

From Michael Birney, Bonn

A Christmas tree angel is only a genuine member of the heavenly host if it has wings, suitable white robes and is opening its mouth to sing Hallelujah, a Hamburg court has ruled.

This celestial judgment was handed down after an unseasonable dispute between the city's customs authorities and an importer of china figurines aspiring to the rank of angels.

According to the Office of the City Treasurer, the importer maintained that his ceramic wares, each shaped to hold a candle were Christmas tree decorations, and as such exempt from duty Hamburg's customs inspectors thought

otherwise, however, finding the would-be angels peculiarly lacking in ethereal attributes, slapped on hefty taxes.

The court agreed with the customs men, basing its judgment primarily on the fact that the angels offered for consideration had no wings. Wings, it opined, "Are in Western culture the quintessential distinguishing characteristic of angels." To show that this important legal precedent be thoroughly grounded, it added that although angels were represented as wingless in pre-Christian times, since the fourth century the concept of an angel has always been bound to the representation of wings.

## India says 'give us back our Koh-i-Noor'

From Michael Hamlyn, Delhi

A shopping list of Indian antiques and works of art in Britain is to be drawn up by the Indian High Commission in the Aldwych in London, including the Koh-i-Noor diamond, the brightest jewel in the Queen Mother's crown.

The list will be used to bring pressure on Britain to return them to India.

The disclosure that the High Commission had been asked to draw up such an inventory - and certain guidelines had been given to them for the purpose - came during a discussion in the Indian Parliament over the return of the Koh-i-Noor diamond, now resting in the Tower of London.

Mr P. K. Thangon, the deputy minister of education, told members of the Lok Sabha there was no inventory of Indian antiques in Britain, and furthermore Britain did not accept the principle that cultural property which had been acquired freely and legitimately over the years should be returned to other countries. But he added that India would continue to pursue the matter through international forums.

The minister came under extremely strong pressure over the Koh-i-Noor, the 110-carat "Hill of Light", ceded to Queen Victoria in the treaty annexing the Punjab in 1849. Mr Subramaniam Swamy, a prominent member of the Janata Party, declared: "It is the demand of the entire country that it should be returned to us." He was vociferously supported by other opposition.

Mr Thangon had said somewhat naively that the question of a return did not arise as the Koh-i-Noor was given as a gift, by the Maharajah of Lahore, Duleep Singh. That caused a furious outburst, as well it might, since the poor old Maharajah had been obliged to make a free gift of his entire domain by British force of arms in one of the most cynical actions of the colonization of the sub-continent.

To calm the row, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Mr Balram Jakhar suggested to the minister that the question to be answered was whether the Maharajah was the proper authority to make such a gift. "Was he independent to do so?" he inquired.

## South Korea will free 1,600 under amnesty

Seoul (Reuters) - South Korea yesterday announced an amnesty for more than 1,000 criminals and political dissidents, including nine serving life sentences, who will either be freed from jail or have their civil rights restored.

Under a presidential clemency order effective today, 1,623 prisoners, more than 1,400 of them common criminals, will be released, while another 142 people already freed from prison will have their civil and political rights restored.

Those benefiting from the amnesty include General Chung Seung Hwa, the former Army chief of staff and martial law commander, released in 1980. He was among several senior military officers arrested in 1979 by President Chun Doo Hwan, then an army major-general, soon after the assassination of President Park Chung Hee.

In an investigation headed by Major-General Chun, General Chung was convicted of involvement in President Park's assassination by his own security chief.

## Britons plead for lives of Chirwas

By Henry Stanhope, Diplomatic Correspondent

Mrs Shirley Williams, the president of the SDP, and Lord Elwyn-Jones, a former Lord Chancellor made personal appeals yesterday for the life of Mr Orton Chirwa, the Opposition leader in Malawi, and his wife, Vera, who are facing the death sentence for treason.

Together with Miss Janet Johnson, the London director of Amnesty International, they called on the Malawi High Commission to deliver personal messages to President Hastings Banda, who will have the last word over the Chirwas' fate.

Mr Chirwa, a veteran Malawi politician and former Minister of Justice, was convicted and sentenced to death, along with his former lawyer wife last May. But they were given leave to appeal, and this appeal hearing ended last month.

Amnesty and their other friends and supporters in London fear that although no verdict has yet been declared, it could be announced over the Christmas holiday, making it difficult to launch any appeals if the decision goes against the Chirwas. Only President Banda would then be able to grant a reprieve.

Leaders of the Church of Scotland are also preparing to intercede with Dr Banda, himself an elder of the church. Andrew Doig, a former Moderator, flew to Malawi to appeal on behalf of the Chirwas earlier this year.

Mrs Williams is a long-standing friend of Mrs Chirwa, while Mr Chirwa himself was once a junior counsel with Lord Elwyn-Jones. Both were said to feel very strongly on the matter, according to Amnesty sources.

A Foreign Office spokesman said they were keeping in close touch with the situation.

Mr Chirwa: Faces the death sentence

Cruise ban refused in Germany

Karlsruhe (Reuters) - West Germany's Federal Constitutional Court yesterday rejected petitions seeking a legal ban on the deployment of Pershing 2 and cruise missiles.

The court ruled that deployment did not violate the country's constitution and it was not the court's task to judge political decisions. Germany is bound by a treaty not to manufacture or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons.

The first of 108 Pershings began arriving a month ago, and a Defence Ministry spokesman said they will be operational by the end of the year.

West Germany is also due to receive 96 of the 464 cruise missiles to be deployed in five West European countries, after the Soviet Union's refusal to dismantle its SS20 rockets.

A wave of petitions from various factions in the country's big anti-nuclear movement, had been filed with the court.

## Uganda lets Rwandans go home

From Charles Harrison, Nairobi

The Ugandan Government has ordered local officials in Rakai district, west of Lake Victoria, to allow several thousand ethnic Rwandans to return to their homes in the area. The Rwandans were driven out after clashes with tribes in the area earlier this month.

Ugandan officials say no orders were given for the Rwandans, many of whom have lived in Uganda for generations, to be uprooted - although nearly 100,000 other Rwandans who had been living in areas further west were ordered into refugee camps more than a year ago.

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees asked the Ugandan Government for information on the situation in Rakai, and was told that it arose from local tribal conflicts. Efforts are now being made to return the estimated 6,000 Rwandans to their former home in Rakai district.

Reports from the area say members of other tribes who looted the Rwandans' homes and cattle herds are now abandoning their loot as police try to track them down.

## Boom in Soviet car industry - and any car will do

From Richard Owen, Moscow

The seven millionth Zhiguli car rolled off the assembly line not long ago and the Soviet car industry is celebrating. Soviet officials say that the Zhiguli, modelled on the Italian Fiat, has the best qualities of a family car, namely "comfort, reliability and efficiency".

Most Russians would say that while that might have been true when Fiat first set up its gigantic new plant at Togliatti on the Volga in 1970, Zhigulis have become increasingly uncomfortable, unreliable and inefficient since the Italians left for home and handed over to local management. Many are already queuing up to get on the waiting list for the new version of the rival Moskvich family saloon, soon to be produced in conjunction with the French firm Renault. The

present Moskvich is nearly 20 years old and the new French-styled model is due to make its long awaited appearance on Moscow roads in 1986.

On the other hand, for many would-be car owners any car at all would do, since production cannot keep pace with demand. As Soviet consumer expectations continue to rise, owning a car no longer seems an unattainable dream. The result is not only a huge waiting list but also a thriving black market in second-hand cars.

A new Zhiguli costs about 10,000 roubles (£8,000), equivalent to four years wages for an average worker. An astonishing number of Russians are able to provide the cash and willing to join the queue. But with new cars and spare parts in such short supply, private enterprise has moved in to fill the gaps in

consumer demand, and the authorities are now trying, if not to stamp it out, then at least to control the black market. As usual with illegal dealing, it is the Georgians and other southerners who are in the forefront of the used car business. On patches of waste land on the outskirts of Moscow you can see hundreds of prospective buyers bargaining with the owners of second-hand vehicles, many of which would scarcely pass muster even in the most run-down London car lot.

But sporadic attempts to regulate the car trade seem unlikely to subdue what seems to be an irrepressible Russian desire to own a car despite all the obstacles and difficulties. Officials say they want to avoid the "negative consequences of uncontrolled automobilization" and have held back develop-

ment of a network of repair and service stations. Certainly facilities for the motorist remain rudimentary.

There are only 38 petrol stations in Moscow, 21 of them for foreigners and diplomats only. Car batteries are definitely - temporarily unobtainable - so are windshield wipers, with the result that most prudent car owners carefully remove theirs whenever they park and put them back on only when it starts to rain. Thefts of car parts have soared, and some Russians are reluctant to buy the more elaborate Zhiguli models in case they are stripped of all external gadgetry.

The huge eight-lane highways which radiate from the centre of Moscow like the spokes of a wheel have not yet become clogged with traffic. But they are not as empty as they used to

be, and the Moscow traffic system, which is based on a complex system of ring roads intersecting the boulevards, is not designed to cope with the heavy traffic of a modern city.

One improvement now being planned is the installation of automatic traffic lights. Most of Moscow's traffic lights are still manually operated, with a traffic policeman perched above the road in a glass control-box.

Even when automation arrives, however, the traffic police will stay on in strength, if only to bring traffic to a halt when some high level official comes thundering down the middle of the road from the Kremlin in his black limousine with curtains on the windows. For the time being there are no shortages of new cars, no traffic fines, no traffic jams, and plenty of spare parts.

## US-born bishop murdered in Nicaragua

Mangua (Reuters AFP) - Rebels shot dead an American-born bishop after kidnapping him near Nicaragua's northern border with Honduras. The Government announced yesterday.

An official radio announcement said Bishop Salvador Schaefer, aged 65, was killed by right-wing rebels when "putting up resistance".

Mgr Schaefer, the Bishop of Bluefield's on the Atlantic coast, was seized with an American priest, Wendelin Schaefer, and two Miskito Indian lay churchmen earlier this week.

ROME: The Pope said yesterday that if Bishop Schaefer had been murdered, "it would be very sad news which covers this pre-Christmas time with sadness".



# THE ARTS

## Cinema

### Special effects of Christmas

**Brainstorm (15)**  
Empire

**Krull (PG)**  
Odeon Leicester Square

**Family Business**  
ICA

It is only the reminiscent Spirit of Christmas that forces the confession out of me: this week is the exact fifth anniversary of my first film. I hasten to add (since ordinarily I would never admit to much over 10 years) that I was a very tiny creature indeed. Only the suitability of the film, which was Paramount's *Alice in Wonderland*, and the fact that as a babe in arms I got in free (money was tight in the Depression years) could explain that first cinema outing. Even so I remember the circumstances clearly. It was a matinee, but it was already dark and snowing hard when I was carried home. I was wearing brown corduroy leggings of the kind in which they then coddled children; and while these were being peeled off I was shown the book and the Tenniel illustrations, and marvelled how these people had arrived home before me. From that moment I was hooked. Utterly, on the cinema and insisted on being taken again and again, however unsuitable the film. They cannot have paid much heed to the British Board of Film Censors at the Plaza and the Corn Exchange in Lincoln, because I remember being scared to jelly by "H"-certificated films. More agreeably, the reprobate W. C. Fields, who was Humpty Dumpty in that *Alice*, became a passion. I saw every film he played in, could not distinguish him from my flesh-and-blood uncles, and worship him to this day. From that moment, at Christmas 1933, my fate and future were determined. Is such precocious formation good,

bad or inevitable? The moral of the story is not clear. One purpose of telling it, though, apart from indulgent reminiscence, is that it shows how, at one time, the cinema industry really took note of Christmas, and made and showed films that would grab family audiences at a time when competing distractions, not to speak of seasonal colds, would otherwise have decimated attendances. They recognized that in the Christmas holidays children can twist parents round their little fingers. All the cinema had to do was to pull in the children: the families would follow. This seasonal principal went back at least as far as 1899 when Georges Méliès's tableau film *Cinderella* played at the music halls refined enough for children to be taken to them.

Those days are gone. The competition of television is too great and no one bothers any more. There is nothing at all seasonal about the current releases: *Never Say Never Again*, *Jaws 3D* and *Trading Places*, with *Flying Saucer*, *Private French Lessons* and *Let's Make a Dirty Movie* for more *recherché* adult tastes. The single exception is Disney's Christmas double bill of *The Jungle Book* and *Mickey's Christmas Carol*. Just to prove that there can still be life in old market formulas, it is doing very nicely, thank you.

Of course it may be that the cinema trade reckons that today's Computer Kids want not cartoons and fairy tales but the sort of electronic special effects which are the principal purpose of this week's two commercial releases.

In films like *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* and *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* and *Blade Runner* Douglas Trumbull, who had already directed *Silent Running*, established himself as the king of special effects. For *Brainstorm* he was producer, director and supervisor of the special effects, which use 70mm Panavision film. The story is about two research scientists, working for a commercial company, who develop a device

which can record and reproduce the combined sensations of the human intellect, imagination and emotions. Their first elation is rapidly dashed as they see their discovery exploited by their ruthless employers and, converted to a brain-washing device, by the military authorities.

The film struck the worst of possible luck. Natalie Wood, who plays the estranged wife of the male scientist (Christopher Walken), died before her part was finished; and, despite cunning patching and restructuring, it leaves this central relationship rather sketchy. A bigger drawback, even so, is that the imaginative conception of the script (by Robert Stütz and Philip Frank Messina, from a story by Bruce Joel Rubin) falls far short of the technology of the effects in sophistication.

The woman scientist (Louise Fletcher) dies of cardiac failure but before departure has the presence of mind to hitch herself to the machine so as to record all the sensations of death. Death, however, turns out to be only a flight of animated soap bubbles rather like double-exposure picture-postcards of the 1930s. The dénouement to effect the undoing of the villains simply degenerates into low farce, as Tattletale electronic robots run amok and set upon their masters. After that it all simply comes inconsequently to a halt.

*Krull*, directed by Peter Yates, combines sword and sorcery with space. The story is fairly incomprehensible. Set on the far-off planet Krull, it manages to combine elements of Homeric and Arthurian romance (some of the characters have Celtic-sounding names like Colwyn and Ynyr), *Romeo and Juliet* and *Beauty and the Beast* and *King Kong*. The princely hero battles with the Beast on behalf of the heroine, variously abetted by character parts (Freddie Jones) and make-up jobs (Bernard Bresslaw's self-conscious Cyclops).

All among the rignarole there are visionary moments - a giant spider's web, or the disintegration of the



Douglas Trumbull directing Natalie Wood in her last film, *Brainstorm*

Beast's castle - though the most magical effect of all is provided almost without trick work: the ride of the Fire Horses, a thundering herd of lovely white Clydesdales.

*Family Business*, directed by Tom Cohen and filmed by Tom Hurwitz, is a slice-of-life anthropological study of two aspects of Middle America: the family and business. Howard Snider is a former Marine lieutenant-colonel now struggling in the maelstrom of a Sharkey Pizza Parlour concession, assisted by his large, loyal and rather bored family of wife and eight children.

The intention of this kind of slice-

of-life *cinéma vérité*, filmed at length, with a minimum of editorial intervention, is to permit the people to reveal themselves and their inner feelings and motives. In fact they rarely do this, any more than people reveal themselves in real life, even without a camera there. Consequently we find ourselves a great deal more fascinated by the mechanical processes of making and marketing pizzas than with the rather elusive sentiments and relationships of this pleasant, moody family facing the odds of Reaganomics.

David Robinson

## Opera

Interestingly grainy voice, Eduardo Alvarez grows through his performance as a Manrico whose dramatic spirit is willing even when his stately tenor grows weak. Natalia Rom, from Leningrad, is also a little short of stamina as Leonora though she sculpts every minute of her small-scale performance with exquisite care.

The even evening is focused by Cynthia Buchanan's Azucena, a performance of almost infinite shades of vocal and dramatic emotion which will surely grow to be a great one in another time, another place.

Hilary Finch

**Kanawa/South Yorkshire Opera**  
City Hall, Sheffield

What better way for South Yorkshire Opera, a vital amateur company, to raise funds for next season's productions than by luring Dame Kiri Te Kanawa to Sheffield to give a gala concert with them? Only, of course, to make doubly sure of an audience by inviting Richard Baker along to introduce it.

Dame Kiri, accompanied tastefully by John Constable, began with some heavy-handed Handel. "Care self" sounded almost like a Schubert song, though there was more fire to "Non disperar chi si".

But Mozart brought out better things from her. A poised "Chi si, chi si, qual si", beautifully shaped, preceded a reading of the touching concert aria "Nehmt meinen Dank" that oozed childish innocence and charm, and by contrast in

Yuri Lyubimov, whose production of *Tristan and Isolde* in Bologna was reviewed on this page earlier in the week, is to stage *Rigoletto* at next year's Maggio Musicale Fiorentino. It will open the festival on May 5. Lyubimov will again be working with the British designer Stefano Larzari, who provided the sets for *Tristan*.

Countess Almaviva's aria from *Figaro*, "Dove sono", Dame Kiri seized with relish the opportunity for intense and subtle characterization, her voice at its smooth, rich and flexible best.

Similarly four of Cante-loube's *Chans d'Auvergne* proved well suited to her. Simple, their slightly naughty messages may be, yet they demand a voice of extraordinary flexibility and at the same time an intelligence that can retain the unblemished pastoral atmosphere which pervades them. Dame Kiri achieved just the right flavour, as she did in the three arias with which she ended. Scarcely a breath was perceptible in Juliet's romance "O quante volte" from Bellini's *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, while every ravishing gasp was made to tell in Puccini's "Vissi d'arte" and "Dove lieta" from operas far more famous, *Tosca* and *La Bohème*.

Between her groups of songs the South Yorkshire Opera Chorus, conducted by Terry Hobson and accompanied by Peter Rhodes, sang heartily and in English a wide selection of choruses. The sopranos may wobble slightly, but this is a well balanced choir with a gratifyingly strong line of tenors.

Stephen Pettitt

## Theatre in London

To the Young Vic authors, Nick Munn (music) and J. Edward Oliver (lyrics), all it offers is a pretext for an anachronistic comedy they could have subtitled "Evita and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat". First produced, like "The Sun and the Rain", by the conjurer's box by her magician uncle Mordcaai, Esther joins in the royal beauty contest, proclaiming her love for the King amid the jeers of the other girls, and steps forward to deliver a "Don't cry for me Moses and Persians" proclamation into the imperial microphone.

The authors have transformed Esther and Mordcaai from Jews to Medians, so that, when the villainous Prime Minister Haman gets the pogrom going, they go to ground in a Median resistance camp run by the ousted Queen Vashti. There is one electrifying moment, straight out of the Bible, where Esther, saying she can do nothing to help, changes her mind when Mordcaai points out that she will be killed like the rest of her tribe.

Otherwise, the task of translating biblical scenes into a royal disco dance and aerobic class, and staging the downfall of David Henry's frock-coated Haman in a Chinese restaurant, leaves the drama unexplored.

Rice and Lloyd-Webber developed their style to tell a story; here the same tricks of sung narrative, fairy-tale characterization and danger-defusing dance music are there for their own sake, and the effect is antiseptically half-hearted. There are some good voices in the company; and Amanda Redman does more than the book to persuade you that the heroine's heart is in the right place.

Irving Wardle

**Pop music**  
Lyceum

Madness, purveyors of the self-styled "Nitty Boys" sound, have long been London's favourite band. Their success has seen them grow with dignity from simple ska roots to a real musical force. The maturing seven-piece Madness are a revelation. Augmented here by strings and Dick Cuthbert's flexible reeds, they eased through a store of witty, timeless pop songs with relaxed assurance and instrumental élan. Like the Small Faces and the Kinks before

them, Madness are capable of disguising everyday vignettes with a sardonic layer of glee; this artifice does not disguise the innate seriousness of their best numbers. While the singers Suggs and Carl Smith swapped roles, the one as deadpan as the other was extrovert, the band rocked around a startling variety of styles from the clipped R&B of "Bed and Breakfast Man" to the psychedelic reggae of "Grey Day". Mike Baron's keyboards are the fulcrum of Madness music. Usually content to flesh out the sinuous rhythms of the drummer Woody and Mark Bedford, he occasionally added evocative leads that transported the sound to New Orleans; the

Max Bell

## Television

### Deftly delightful

On the face of it, the story behind last night's Channel 4 film *Accounts* did not seem to offer enough to sustain a full-length feature film but in the event its simplicity proved to be its strength.

A recently-widowed woman and her two sons, aged 19 and 17, move from their Northumbrian tenanted farm to sink their fortunes in a hill farm of their own in the Scottish border country. From this Michael Wilcox developed - from his stage play, which won him an award in 1981 - a study of their relationships with each other, the land, and the outside world which never lost its hold.

It was an intimate piece of work including a keenly-observed examination of adolescent sexuality and a daunting portrait of the hazards of life on a hill farm. The family come to terms with their differing compulsions and each other while skirting bankruptcy and potentially hazardous personal encounters.

Robert Smeaton and Michael McNally played the elder and younger sons respectively: the first impulsive, inclined to be

sexually predatory but not without sensitivity; the second more disciplined in his behaviour and leaning towards a less orthodox type of sexuality that would, one might think, cause the odd problem in such a hardy community.

In their contrasting roles both did marvellously well, giving an impressive portrayal of sibling rivalry and affection. As their mother, Elspeth Charleston also convinced. All three looked at home, someone having taken the precaution of giving the boys, naturally most in contact with the mud and the blood, a pre-filming stint on a farm.

These were their first acting roles, which says much for them and the director Michael Darrow, who handled this delightful, moving and picturesque film deftly. I note that he comes from Newcastle so that none of the Geordie dialect, which gave me moments of incomprehensibility, would trouble him at all. Despite these little thickets when I was at a loss with the sound, I thought his film the most refreshing so far from Channel 4.

Dennis Hackett

## London debuts

### Flexible partnership

The most finished playing of the week came from the Australian flute and harpichord duo of Vernon Hill and Roger Heagney - not surprisingly, in view of their considerable experience at home. Besides a close blend of refined and mellow tone, their partnership was distinguished by intimate give and take; sonatas by Bach, Handel, Mozart and the little-known Michael Bleyer emerged all the more stylish and piquant because so truly shared. Fine breath-control enabled Mr Hill to sustain Bach's slow cantilena with more intensity than often heard from a flute. Mr Heagney's velvet fingers in their turn encouraged his Rubio (after Taskin) harpichord to sing in a way Haydn might not have thought possible when writing his solo Sonata in G.

David Tele's quiet command of his cello and poised, truth-seeking musicianship found ideal outlet in Bach's taxing unaccompanied Suite in D, given a clear-cut, purposeful sense of direction without any suggestion of an interpreter at work. This American's full, warm tone and infinite capacity for taking pains were valuable assets in Beethoven's E flat Variations and Debussy's Sonata, too, though the French work, in particular, needs a touch more intensity and temperament - from the reliable Myriam Teie at the piano as well. Clashing debuts only permitted appraisal of Sweden's Garda Trio in Schubert's B flat

Trio, a sympathetic, well co-ordinated performance of considerable first-movement breadth, and in an explosive movement by Shostakovich played as encore. Here, more earlier suspicion that the group's leadership came from Ingemar Edgren at the piano was routed by the biting urgency of Gustavo Garcia's violin and Goran Holmström's cello.

Of the week's two pianists, the Korean Hyung-Kyu Kim played early variations by Beethoven and Schubert's A minor Sonata, Op 143, with such incisive articulation and rhythm, and so positive a response to contrasts of mood, that it was easy to condone the forceful dynamic level at which she chose to project this music - and five Temperament Sketches by her compatriot Isang Yun. But in Chopin's 24 Preludes her insistence verged on the insensitive.

Attempting to extract the last drop, the American pianist Barry Goldsmith often sacrificed stability of rhythm, elegance of line and beauty of tone. Bach's B flat minor Prelude and Fugue and Beethoven's late A major Sonata were unsteady in their impulsive flexibility, and even Berg's highly-strung Op 1 needed a firmer contour besides greater textural clarity. Except for a slow but commendably poised funeral march, Chopin's B flat minor Sonata emerged no less militant than his "Revolutionary" Study.

Joan Chissell

### Theatre in New York Broadway invalid sent back to bed

**Doonesbury: Laura Dean**  
up in arms with  
Keith Szarabjka



Broadway, suffering from an all-time low of new shows and reduced attendances for a new season, came at least temporarily alive with the opening of Peter Brook's *La Tragedie de Carmen*. The stunningly simple staging, rapturously received by most New York critics, is particularly effective in the confines of the Vivian Beaumont Theatre, whose future is much in dispute. Brook definitively shows that the Beaumont's problematical space can be commanded to serve not only large-scale productions but, small-scale, intimate, emotionally piercing drama.

The two musicals opening just after *Carmen* sent Broadway's fabulous invalid image right back to hospital. Many critics fell upon *Marilyn* (Minskoff Theatre) as if it were a mad dog, but this sometimes earnest salute to Marilyn Monroe is only a sad pink puddle. The product of a committee of composers and producers, the show has some touching moments largely due to the poignant acting of Alyson Reed in the title role, but it is too fragmented to hold either as a tribute to the late star or as general entertainment.

The combination of kitsch (Las Vegas-type numbers, costumes and sets), intrusive characters like three performers representing destiny and one-dimensional supporting characters, including Marilyn's virtually nondescript three husbands, make the show more resumé than biography. Miss Reed imitates Monroe's voice and movements convincingly and sings well on her own, and as her adoring fan Willy Falk proves a show-stopping singer in his Broadway debut.

*Doonesbury* (Biltmore Theatre), with book and lyrics

by Garry Trudeau, based upon his comic strip about US college life and politics, is a pleasant little show. The music of Elizabeth Swados, a composer whose signature is eclecticism so pervasive it belies individuality, is lively but sounds at least 10 years old.

Wedded to a book about graduating students whose off-campus home is threatened by a wheeler-dealer, the show has no satiric sting and emerges as an amiable entertainment likely to attract youths and Trudeau fans, but too middling to lure general audiences at Broadway prices. The ingratiating cast of 10 boasts an especially fetching singer-dancer named Laura Dean, who brings back all the good connotations to the word "cute". Peter Larkin's droll cut-out sets and Jacques Levy's staging move the show briskly.

The remaining new Broadway offerings resemble more a bland diet than a list of shows. Directed by and starring Carroll O'Connor (television's Archie Bunker), *Brothers* (Music Box) was the only original drama scheduled for this season and closed after one performance. His tale of a patriarch (Mr O'Connor) vainly trying to hold together his family and shipyard union had echoes of *All My Sons* and *Death of a Salesman*, but so faint that one longed for the sound of Arthur Miller grinding his axe. Limping along is *Amen Corner* (Nederlander Theatre), based upon a James Baldwin play about a Harlem evangelist, which distinguishes itself as a strange hybrid - a gospel musical without soul.

A revival of the tepid musical *Zorba* (Broadway Theatre) is buoyed by Anthony Quinn's performance in the title role and bubbles whenever Lita Kedrova

comes onstage as an aging, waitlike courtesan. Al Pacino gives out star quality - along with techie mannerisms - in a revival of David Mamet's *American Buffalo* (Booth Theatre) which has become more noted for its offstage than onstage drama. James Hayden, so believable as Mr Mamet's pitiful young junkie Bobby that he was unrecognizable as the same performer who made a praiseworthy Broadway debut last season as a matinee idol-like Rodolfo in *A View from the Bridge*, died aged 29 from an overdose of heroin shortly into *American Buffalo*'s run - an ironic and sad end to an exciting talent.

Most positive are new plays by two of our best young playwrights. *Sound and Beauty* (Public Theatre) shows the Chinese American dramatist David Henry Hwang turning to Japanese culture for the themes of two one-act oblique love stories encased in ritualized power struggles. The director-choreographer-actor John Lo stages both with a keen ear and eye for the interplay of silence and sound, action and stillness.

Christopher Durang's *Baby with Backwater* (Playwrights Horizons) demonstrates that occasional comparisons of his approach with Aristophanes are apt. Here he dramatizes, with his customary fury and anarchic humour, the premise that the way to raise a happy, healthy child is to do everything possible to drive it crazy. A new Durang note, one of reconciliation, evolves by the end and gives hope that he may mature into the rare writer in whom inventiveness and craftsmanship become fast friends.

Holly Hill

**Il trovatore**  
Grand, Leeds

Viva Verdi! Civil war has arrived in Leeds: not 1410 with the struggle for the throne of Aragon, but Spain in the 1930s. Leonora's house, the gypsy camp and the prison are all found within a decrepit railway siding, a handsome set by Michael Yeargan with all the intricate iron-work and missing panes of frosted glass so dear to the theatre of revolution.

The action for the Anvil Chorus is provided by pick-axes hacking a long-dead railway-line and a few rides being hit together. Azucena sings aloft an army truck which cuts her off; and, at more harrowing moments, clouds of steam rise from the sidings as from the last expiring puff.

The rest follows suit. Indeed the weakness of Andrei Serban's new production for Opera North is not that it imposes extraneous points but simply that it is rather pointless. Unlike Lavelli's *Norma* in Bonn, which it so closely resembles, it provides little opportunity for its protagonists to sharpen the original work on the whetstone of their newly-shaped roles.

So the music has to work rather harder. Alas, under the baton of Yvan Pascal Tortelier, making his British operatic debut, it generally does not. There is energy enough, but it is light and flicker; every dotted rhythm becomes perky, every triple metre a waltz with too little time spent feeling Verdi's pulse.

The Kansas-born James Dietrich is as yet a rather awkward Grant, though with an

**Swan Esther**  
Young Vic

The obvious word for Frank Dunlop's outgoing Young Vic production is "unpretentious", provided nobody takes this as a recommendation. For anyone setting out to turn the Book of Esther into a musical, it is necessary to have a few pretensions.

The legend of a Jewish girl who becomes Queen of Persia, at a time of Jewish exterminations is a wonderful source for a political dramatist. The name of God never appears. What do appear are the themes of racist power and male supremacy; coupled with an elegantly ironic revenge plot containing numerous highly-charged metaphors and puzzles to excite the inventions of anyone retelling the story.

**Pop music**  
Lyceum

Madness, purveyors of the self-styled "Nitty Boys" sound, have long been London's favourite band. Their success has seen them grow with dignity from simple ska roots to a real musical force. The maturing seven-piece Madness are a revelation. Augmented here by strings and Dick Cuthbert's flexible reeds, they eased through a store of witty, timeless pop songs with relaxed assurance and instrumental élan. Like the Small Faces and the Kinks before

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## SPECTRUM

Violent death and torture are  
shattering the peace of rural Namibia  
as South African units battle  
to hold the line against guerrillas  
Michael Hornsby visits the bush where the  
seeds of civil war are being sown each day

# A land in the shadow of terror

**Mpungu**  
The far north-eastern Kavango area of Namibia, only a few miles from the Angolan border, is normally a sleepy place: a Lutheran mission station with a small church and clinic and a scattering of tribal kraals, the traditional stockaded enclosures of thatched huts fashioned from stakes driven into the ground, near which a few scrawny cattle seek what nourishment they can from the dusty soil. It is typical of the peasant-farmer settlements in the border region along the Okavango river.

On the day earlier this month that I and another journalist visited Mpungu, however, it was bustling with unwanted and unwelcome activity. The day before a known informer used by the South African security forces had been shot dead in broad daylight by an unidentified assailant who then ran off. The killing was presumed to be the work of Swapo, the South West Africa People's Organisation, which has been fighting a bush war for the independence of Namibia, as South West Africa is now known internationally, for the last 17 years.

The pastor, Nathaniel Shilongo, had immediately reported the incident to the nearby army base at Nepara. It was clear, however, that he was still regarded with intense suspicion by the white South African soldiers and camouflaged black members of a special anti-guerrilla unit known as Koevoet who had descended on Mpungu just before us in two of the wedge-shaped, mine-proof personnel carriers which are the main conveyance of the security forces.

Founded by Finnish missionaries in the last century, the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church, ELOC for short, now has an almost entirely indigenous black clergy, unlike the Roman Catholic church which is still largely run by white missionaries from Germany. It is the biggest church in Namibia and the South African security police tend to regard it as the ecclesiastical arm of Swapo, an organization that paradoxically also features in government propaganda as the godless agent of international communism.

Nervously mopping his sweat-beaded brow, Pastor Shilongo recited yet again his version of the shooting incident for his unwanted visitors. He

had good reason to be worried. Koevoet - the name is Afrikaans for "crowbar" - operates as a special wing of the South African police, and has earned a notorious reputation for brutality.

Its twin functions are "interrogation" and "elimination" of Swapo agents and guerrillas, a brief which its members interpret liberally. Supposedly, like other elements of the security forces, it exists to protect Namibia's civilian population against the terrorists, or "tens", as the South African authorities always refer to Swapo. But most villagers will tell you that they feel far more threatened by the security forces than by the tens.

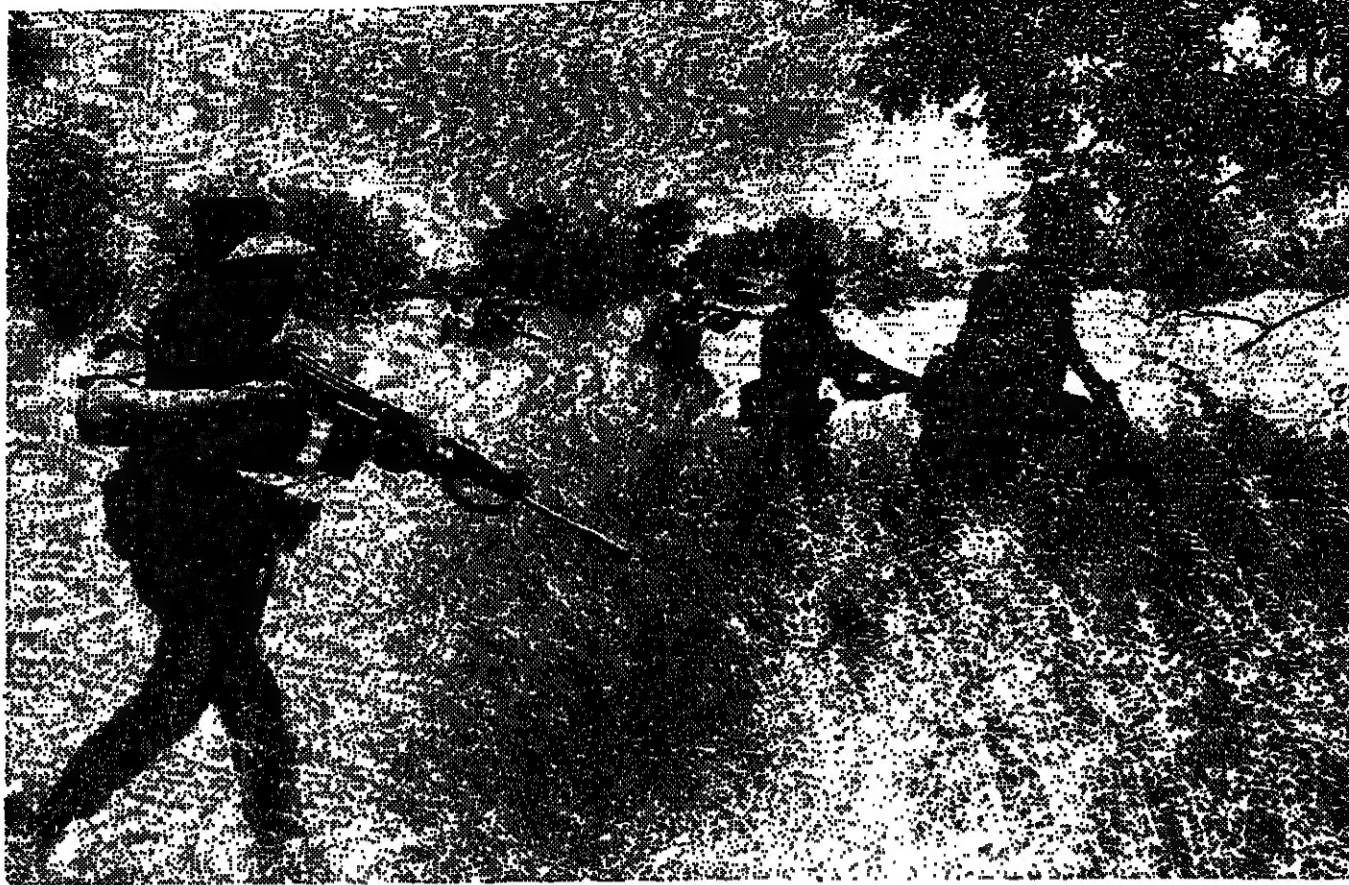


'We are tired of trouble,  
we just want  
independence'

In Rundu, about 150 miles east of Mpungu, another Lutheran pastor, Johannes Sindano, who was detained for three weeks earlier this year under draconian security laws modelled on those in force in South Africa proper, told us: "People are very, very frightened of Koevoet. They are more frightened of Koevoet than of Swapo because they see more of them."

Beatings and harassment are said to be routinely used against anyone suspected of withholding information about Swapo. Koevoet, whose membership is 90 per cent black, and the security police have the worst reputation, but young black Namibians recruited into the South West Africa Territorial Force (SWATF), which is now estimated to account for about 14,000 of the 50,000 men (including logistical back-up) which South Africa has in the territory, are also accused of bullying, intimidation and worse. Like Koevoet, the SWATF operates under white leadership.

Ndara Kapitango, a 63-year-old refugee from Angola, claims that some time last June two drunken bushmen soldiers of the SWATF came to his kraal near Mpungu, beat him up and held him over the fire on which he had been preparing his supper. He lost consciousness and was left lying at the edge of the fire. His right arm had to be amputated and he is still in the



Namibia patrol: "Most villagers say they feel more threatened by the security forces than by guerrillas"

Mpungu clinic recuperating from appalling burns. Army sources say two soldiers have been "disciplined" for the incident.

"I fear a lot of people will be beaten up in the next few days (because of the shooting of the police informer)," Wilhelm Mpsa Setent, the local headman, told us in his kraal on a low hill overlooking the Mpungu mission. "They started beating people up yesterday. We don't mind being questioned, but they beat us when we do not give the answers they want."

The white-haired old man, who remembers working as a kitchen boy for a German officer before the First World War when Namibia was still a German colony, then recalled, through an interpreter, a visit to his kraal last June by a group of white and black soldiers who accused him of helping Swapo. "They took my grandson outside, and fired a shot. We thought he was dead, then they came back and said 'that child is dead, now we are going to shoot you', and they pushed the barrel of the gun against my forehead."

The old headman insisted that he had never had any contacts with Swapo. "People are confused. If you are on the side of the government, Swapo may kill you. If you are on the side of Swapo, the government beats you up and causes you trouble. So people don't know who to support. We are tired, we just want independence, because then the Boers will leave, and there will be peace."

That is a widely expressed sentiment. The guerrillas do, undoubtedly, have considerable support in Kavango, even though their main stronghold is in Ovamboland to the west. But many people are simply tired of the endless harassment, violence and fear.

The insurgents exercise their own forms of pressure. Villagers may be forced to supply food to give medical aid. Headmen who cooperate with the security forces are sometimes murdered. Last July Swapo guerrillas in eastern Kavango abducted two black members of Koevoet by night from their family kraal, where they were on leave. They bound their hands behind their backs, led them into the bush and executed them.

The killing unleashed a wave of retaliatory "interrogation" by the security forces, several of whom later

claimed to have been beaten and given electric shocks while in detention.

The South African army is now chiefly occupied with maintaining control over a wide swathe of southern Angola. Military spokesmen coyly admit that the army patrols the area regularly and that units often spend weeks at a time inside Angolan territory. The aim is communication between Swapo's Angolan-based military command and its guerrillas operating inside Namibia to the south.

The task of hunting down the guerrillas has been increasingly "Namibianized" by turning it over to Koevoet, which, although it is not thought to have more than 1,200 men, is currently credited with more than 80 per cent of Swapo "kills". The unit's existence complicates the search for an independence settlement. Formed about four years ago, Koevoet operates in small groups under the command of white South African police officers. Its headquarters are in Oshakati in Ovamboland, and it is jointly controlled by Brigadier Hans Dreyer, a former chief of security police in Natal and police headquarters in Pretoria. Koevoet's existence has only recently been admitted, and much of what it does is still shrouded in secrecy.

A spotlight was turned on the unit earlier this year, however, when an inquest found that Jona Hamukwaya, a primary school teacher, and Kaduma Katanga, a peasant-farmer, from the same village in Western Kavango, had been beaten to death within hours of being detained by Koevoet constables who claimed that "all teachers are Swapos". All that has happened so far is that two Koevoet men have been fined small sums of money for acting "over enthusiastically".



Plague spreads as the  
social fabric is  
torn apart

In a more recent case, Jonas Paulus, another Koevoet member, was sentenced to death for murdering a village headman in Ovamboland last January. During his trial, Paulus told the court that when guerrillas were suspected of being in an area, a Koevoet unit would

go from kraal to kraal interrogating their inhabitants. "If they won't give us information, then one of our group assaults them, slaps them with his open hand, or beats them with a rifle butt."

Paulus also confirmed that Koevoet constables are paid about 350 rands a month (about £210), a salary which can be matched hardly anywhere else in the declining local economy. They also get bonuses, or "head money", depending on how many guerrillas their section kills in a month.

He also disclosed that Koevoet members are often issued with Soviet-made AK 47 rifles, the same weapon as used by Swapo. He himself was masquerading as a Swapo guerrilla when he committed the murder for which he was sentenced. This has lent credence to widespread allegations that Koevoet members sometimes dress up as Swapo guerrillas. If villagers offer food and shelter, they are allegedly beaten up or worse.

It is rare, however, for Koevoet members to be brought to book. Under the Defence Act, they are protected against prosecution if they can show they have acted "in good faith" in counterinsurgency operations.

There is also a tendency to condone the Koevoet's rough methods on the grounds that, as one magistrate put it, "terrorists are not handed to you on a platter".

The war is being contained in the sense that its cost is probably almost indefinitely sustainable by the South African exchequer, and in the sense that it is an obscure and remote conflict which seldom impinges on the consciousness of an outside world with much else to worry about.

The long-term cost to Namibia's social fabric, as the diplomats and politicians argue interminably over the territory's future, is bound to be severe. Thousands of civilians have been driven from their homes by the war in Ovamboland, and civilian health services have largely collapsed. There has been a rapid spread of bubonic plague over the past year. Now there is the fear that South Africa could be sowing the seeds for a civil war as they draw more and more local people into the fight against Swapo.

moreover...  
Miles Kingston

## Full Marx for old celluloid

The chief glory of the Christmas period for me is the season of films on BBC "starring the Marx Brothers, Judy Garland, Michael Caine and Cary Grant". None of the films with this all-star cast has ever been seen before, and me and my video recorder are going to be watching them all, and to hell with carol singers.

First off is *Bringing up Bessie*, a sparkling comedy in which Cary Grant and Judy Garland find the eight-year-old Michael Caine on their doorstep, with a note saying: "Please see this boy gets a good education or failing that, enough to eat, yours, Groucho." Michael Caine has such a good time being brought up that next week they find Groucho, Harpo and Chico in a basket on the doorstep. Most of the plot thereafter centres on whether Cary Grant or Michael Caine has the fake British accent.

Next is *Meet Me in Casablanca*, in which Judy Garland plays an itinerant singer trying to get to St Louis, but who has had the misfortune to book her passage with the Rufus T. Flyswat agency and ends up in Casablanca working as a chambermaid in the Imperial Hotel (proprietor: the Quasimodo brothers). Harpo turns in a beautiful cameo part as the brother with the hump, which he keeps detaching and putting on other people. Anyway, Cary Grant is the world-weary millionaire who books in at the Imperial and falls in love with Judy, who unfortunately is in love with Caine, the British spy. This film contains the famous scene when Chico is playing the piano in a club, and Groucho bursts in shouting: "Don't play it again, Sam!" and shoots his brother, though not dead.

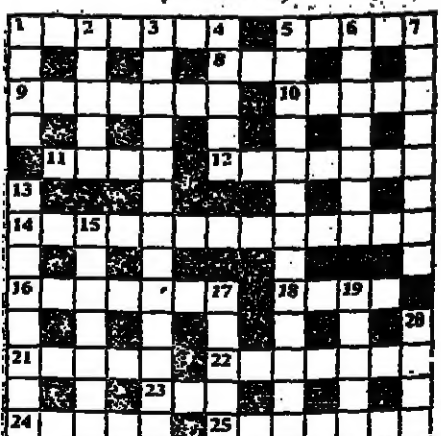
The six of them only made one thriller, *The Waterfront*, which stars Michael Caine as the food correspondent who has the secret of a foolproof mayonnaise, which the Russians would like to get hold of. Judy Garland and Cary Grant are the American couple who unwittingly get it instead and are pursued by the Russians, who want to kill them and Harpo, who wants to stop Judy. Groucho persuades Michael Caine that he must kill Cary Grant to get it back, to which he replies: "But I've never shot a man before," and Groucho says: "You can't go around shooting women all your life." They compromise: Groucho agrees to shoot Judy and Caine agrees to shoot Harpo, who is limbering up for a harp solo. The end is somewhat confused, but it involves Cary Grant attempting to sing and getting mayonnaise all over his face.

Perhaps the least successful of the films they made is *The Marx Brothers go to Philadelphia*, in which Cary Grant and Michael Caine play two missing Marx Brothers, Blotto and Hippo. All five of them fall in love with Judy Garland, but she prefers to run off with James Stewart, who was on loan from MGM at the time. There is a baffling scene in which Harpo tries to enter a camel for the Kentucky Derby, but this is now thought to be a left-over sequence from *Meet Me in Casablanca*.

The greatest of all their films, on Boxing Day, is of course *The Idiot of Oz*, in which Groucho plays the title role. Judy Garland plays herself and Chico plays a piano in mid-air dangling from a balloon. Cary Grant for some reason speaks in an Australian accent throughout; it is now thought that he was misled by the title into thinking that the film was set in Australia. Harpo is superb as the Tin Man; every time he wants a mind, he simply wields a tin-opener on himself and produces a steaming casserole.

The opening scene, where everyone is picked up by a catastrophic hurricane in Kansas and transported thousands of miles, has never been bettered, certainly not in the recent remake *The Day After*. I shall always treasure the great moments from this film: Groucho picking up a brick from the Yellow Road and saying: "I knew this road when it was a public lavatory in Philadelphia"; Cary Grant, as the lion, being tickled to death by Michael Caine; Harpo's Tin Man playing an all-aluminium harp - but why go on? It will all be happening over Christmas and old films, surely, are what Christmas is all about.

## CONCISE CROSSWORD (No 231)

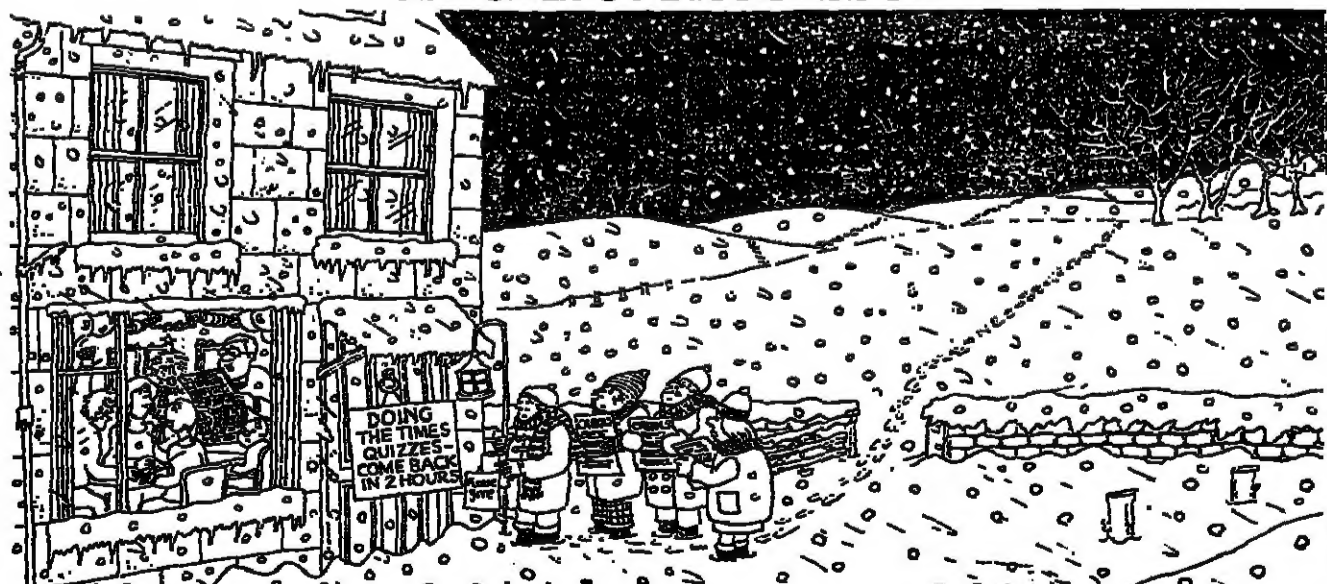


ACROSS  
1 Sketch (7)  
2 Nominates (5)  
3 17th Greek letter (3)  
4 Order region (7)  
5 Means over (5)  
6 Route (12)  
7 Strictly correct (7)  
8 Sovereign's eldest daughter (8,5)  
9 Mischewave (7)  
10 Exchange (4)  
11 Projecting wood piece (5)  
12 Have need of (7)  
13 Financial support (3)  
14 Live somewhere (5)  
15 Surface growing (7)  
16 SOLUTION To No 230  
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DOWN  
1 Medical measure (4)  
2 Assign (5)  
3 Educational (13)  
4 Grip firmly (5)  
5 No prosecution (5,8)  
6 Foggy (7)  
7 Resembling sister (8)  
8 Animated (8)  
9 Innocent girl (7)  
10 Through (5)  
11 To reserve (5)  
12 Do business (4)  
13 Ram

THE TIMES

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## The vexatious path to a state of Satie-ty



Erik Satie and Reinbert de Leeuw: a Christmas best-seller

Almost 60 years after his death, Erik Satie, unquestionably the most eccentric of classical composers, has shocked the bourgeoisie once again.

A quirky bachelor of Franco-Scottish parentage, Satie wrote translucent piano music that sheltered under such absurdly irrelevant names as "bureaucratic sonatine", "desecated embryons", "automatic descriptions", "intimate and secret musics" and "The I-want-you waltz". He did give one literal title, however, to a 90-second motif that he called *Vexations* and he ordered it to be played 840 times without a break.

This instruction was laughed off at the time as yet another of Satie's oddities, as implausible as his concept of "furniture music", sounds that would serve the same function as wallpaper. But when the age of muzak dawned many began to take Satie's philosophies very seriously indeed. Now, a

determined Dutch musician, Reinbert de Leeuw, has recorded *Vexations* complete, 35 times on a single long-playing disc, itself to be played 24 times to achieve Satie's intention.

De Leeuw, a 45-year-old teacher at the Royal Conservatorium in The Hague, plays the 180 notes of *Vexations* woodenly, without variation, mistakes, or any change in volume, emphasis or inflection from one repetition to the next. The record has all the charm and subtlety of a water-torture session. Yet, to the astonishment of everyone involved, it has become one of 1983's Christmas best-sellers.

Released in Britain two weeks ago, the first batch of records sold out immediately and Philips were desperately cabling for more.

For De Leeuw, described by admirers as "a connoisseur of tranquility", the

surprise hit marks the fulfilment of a 20-year-old ambition. He first rose to the challenge of *Vexations* in 1963 when the American composer John Cage hired a team of pianists to play the piece.

Four years later, De Leeuw hired a small hall on Amsterdam's Leidsestraat for a solo attempt at a marathon world premiere. Unfortunately, no one told the caretaker of the historic nature of the recital and the pianist and his handful of listeners were ejected from the premises at 1am, having heard Satie's theme only 117 times.

No one in the record industry, however, can explain the sudden popularity of Satie's monotonous, although some executives have been heard muttering that an awful lot of people are buying Christmas presents this year for relatives they dislike intensely.

Norman Lebrecht



# FRIDAY PAGE

## MEDICAL / BRIEFING



Elizabeth Taylor with Richard Burton, earlier this year

## Beating the drug habit

Speculation is running on three fronts about why Liz Taylor has been admitted to a clinic to recover from the effects of long-term drug taking.

The least likely culprit is slimming tablets. These used to contain amphetamines, because of their appetite-suppressing qualities, but they have been known to be dangerous for some years and are no longer used widely to help people to lose weight.

The second possibility is that she has become dependent on pain killers taken to ease arthritis.

The third suggestion is that Miss Taylor may have become addicted to tranquilizers, which is an internationally recognized phenomenon.

Joan Jerome, organizer of Tranx, a self-help group to support people trying to reduce their intake of tranquilizers, says that 1,200 people have been in contact with Tranx since it was launched a year ago. "At a rough guess 30 to 40 per cent of the people I have spoken to are men," she says, refuting the idea that this type of addiction is entirely a problem for women.

Joan Jerome has a DHSS grant for running the group in Brent and Harrow, though she has a network of contacts all over the country setting up affiliated self-help groups.

There is no fee for joining Tranx, although participants are asked for a donation. Most people make initial contact by phone. "We send out a consent form and a chart for reducing the drugs taken, and then provide support," says the organizer.

Groups meet once a week to share problems and provide mutual support though it may take many months for a person to readjust to life without the support of drugs.

Anyone who is interested in joining Tranx and lives in the Brent and Harrow area can phone 01-427 2065.

## Getting the needle

News that David Griffiths was treated by acupuncture to relieve severe knee pain was given just as much coverage last weekend as his triumph in finishing the 2,330 mile marathon from Peking to Hong Kong to raise money for disabled athletes.

Few people now doubt the value of acupuncture in relieving chronic pain but western doctors, brought up to believe in the causality of science, must always ask why?

Studies have already implicated one major biochemical in relieving pain after acupuncture - beta-endorphin - which is released in the brain and circulates round the nervous system. And there are at least ten other "opioid peptides" with similar biochemical structure to endorphin which may also be involved.

But scientists are by no means unanimous in support of the beta-endorphin theory, though most agree that the "opioid peptides" must play some part. A paper published in the *Lancet* last week suggested that yet another substance - met-enkephalin - might also be important.

Successful acupuncture treatment given by doctors in this country tends to be given locally, with needles inserted where the pain is more intense. This makes sense. But why, as practised in the Far East, putting a needle in the left toe produces a sensation in an entirely different part of the body still remains a mystery.

## Short-sighted swot

Swots, as every schoolboy knows, always wear glasses. And although many people believe the link between intelligence and short-sight is no more than an old wives' tale, there is plenty of statistical evidence supporting the idea.

But nobody knows why the link exists: it may be genetic or it may be environmental.

Protagonists for an environmental link argue that short-sighted children probably find games a bit of a struggle so they naturally prefer to read or entertain themselves with games they can see - which all tend to be a bit cerebral.

The relevance of these different theories is that it is now possible to correct short-sightedness surgically. The technique was developed in the 1950s, but was not used much until there were unsubstantiated reports that the Russians were having high success rates.

Only in the last couple of years has more solid evidence emerged from the United States that some short-sight can be corrected by surgery. The main drawback is that permanent damage to the eye surface may occur inadvertently during the operation.

Barrier methods

Striking an acceptable balance between effectiveness and convenience is the hallmark of a good contraceptive. For women the Pill has always won the day (easy to use and very effective) and streets ahead of diaphragms (laborious to insert) and an intra-uterine device (probably an abortifacient).

But recent *Lancet* reports linking long-term Pill use with cancer of the breast and cervix have frightened the most down-to-earth women.

Next year will see the launch of a new generation of barrier contraceptives. The first, probably on the market in mid-summer through clinics and chemists, is the disposable contraceptive sponge.

The initial clinical trial has been completed at the Margaret Pyke Centre in central London and compares the relative effectiveness of the sponge and diaphragm. Walli Bounds, research coordinator at the centre, says her results are being processed at the moment and will be available early in the new year.

But this trial should be little more than a formality. The sponge, which is soaked in spermicide, is much simpler to insert than a diaphragm, has already been given UK licence and previous trials suggest it is just as safe as a diaphragm if used carefully.

Looking further ahead, Mrs Bounds is waiting for the go-ahead to start a trial on the Contracap - a US invention. The Contracap, a permanent diaphragm, is left covering the cervix for between six months and a year. It is designed with a valve mechanism so that excretions can flow out, but sperm is stopped from entering the womb.

Olivia Timbs and Lorraine Fraser

In last Friday's Medical Briefing, it should have been made clear that all frozen poultry should be thoroughly unfrozen before cooking.

Beatrix Potter's stories have enchanted three young generations.

Now Caroline Moorehead discovers

the newly published letters of the Potter characters

# Peter Rabbit's postbag

Mrs McGregor, poring over her pie dish and dreaming of a fine supper, may not have been much of a speller, but she was less agitated than Squirrel Nutkin after Mr Brown made off with his tail. Their letters, less than two inches high and packed into minute mail bags, have now been brought out in a book, companion to the 23 published tales of Beatrix Potter. In *Yours affectionately, Peter Rabbit*, Mrs Tiggy-Winkle fits over her starch, Jeremy Fisher (signing himself Jeremiah) explains why he never married and invitations pass between Tabitha Twitchit, the Flopsy Bunnies and Alderman Ptolemy.

One of the recipients of these enchanting letters was Beatrix Potter. Miss Potter's godchild and daughter, the governess who came to teach German at No 2 Bolton Gardens in 1883, Beatrix Moore later became a journalist and a contributor to the first issue of *Picture Post*. Beatrix Moore is now 80 and a somewhat cosy Beatrix Potter figure herself, with very bright blue round eyes.

The one memento Beatrix, now Mrs Hammarling, has of her godmother is a silver sugar bowl, a christening present sent to her mother in 1903. There is too the dedication in *The Pie and the Patty Pan*: "For Joan to read to baby".

"I well remember Beatrix Potter turning up to see us in Wandsworth," says Mrs Hammarling. "She wasn't a bit young or pretty but plump and rather rubicund. To me she seemed eccentric and elderly. She always wore a straw bonnet tied under her chin with a lace ribbon. She used to bring a cage of white mice with her and kept her horse and carriage waiting at the door."

It was Beatrix Moore's eldest brother Noel who could be said to have sparked off the celebrated books. Joan Carter stayed only two years as governess with the Potters before leaving to marry Edwin Moore. But the two young women, quite near in age, had become close friends and corresponded throughout their lives.

In 1893 when Joan's eldest son turned six and was ill in bed, Beatrix Potter wrote to him from Barchinore: "I don't know what to write to you so I shall tell you a story about four little rabbits, whose names were Flopsy, Mopsy, Cottontail and



Beatrix Potter and, right top, Beatrix Moore, her god child. Above right Mrs Hammarling today

Peter..."

Though nothing was to come of it for seven years, Noel kept the letter. During those years Beatrix Potter, a shy and solitary young woman, was much put upon by her Victorian parents and took refuge in increasingly beautiful botanical drawings and her love for small animals.

When, in 1901, she conceived of writing and illustrating children's stories, Beatrix remembered her early attempt and wrote asking for it. Printed privately, with black and white illustrations, *Peter Rabbit* was soon taken up by Frederick Warne who asked her to colour the drawings and then sold 27,000 copies in the first year. To the seven succeeding Moore children went *Little Pig Robinson*, *Squirrel Nutkin*, *The Tailor of Gloucester* (Mrs Hammarling's favourite), all based on illustrated letters sent to those same children many years before, and purporting to come from the animals themselves.

The miniature letters, illustrated with scurrying ducks and comical cats, usually arrived at Christmas and were circulated

among Beatrix Potter's young admirers. "She also always sent us an enormous turkey," remembers Mrs Hammarling. And every year came dresses for the two youngest girls: "They were always white party frocks with beading around the waist and lace and embroidery."

As the youngest in the family, born when Beatrix Potter was 37, Beatrix saw little of her godmother. She never joined her much older brothers and sisters on their summer visits to the Lake District, where they were terrified by Miss Potter's whiskery and gruff father. By the time the little girl was ten, Beatrix Potter had married a country solicitor called William Heelis and stopped writing altogether. She turned her back firmly on her small bearded animals after a creative 30 years of her life to farming.

"I do, though, remember her visiting us not long after the wedding and making us all laugh by saying that her honeymoon had been spent meeting a bull for the farm at the station." Later, too, Beatrix Potter wrote to Mrs Moore

to suggest that her godchild be sent to university and that she would pay the fees. Mrs Hammarling laughs: "My mother was Victorian and very straightlaced. She would never have considered turning her daughter into a bluestocking."

The stories that followed *Peter Rabbit* were just as successful and a whole industry - plates, fridges, furry animals - soon built up around the animals, with Beatrix Potter overseeing the production of each book, insisting that it be kept small "for little hands to hold" and cheap, so that children (she called them "little rabbits") could afford them.

What is perhaps surprising is that so little of that fame attached itself to the young recipients of her letters - Louie Warne, who instigated *The Story of a Fierce Bad Rabbit* by complaining that Peter was too good, or Lucie Carr, the Lucie in *The Tale of Mrs Tiggy-Winkle*. Mrs Hammarling can recall no sense of being special in having such a very famous godmother, and Drew Fayle, the little boy whose idea it was that Jeremy Fisher should find himself a wife, has never been traced at all.

# Victims of violence: the double trauma

Those who survive violence often have long-term psychological scars. It is a paradox that some of these scars are caused by the way victims are treated after the event and it is a problem for both doctors and the police: getting the balance right between offering too much and too little help is delicate.

The Oxford Centre for Criminological Research has just reported findings with important implications for the way police should handle victims.

No one realized that there was any psychological problem until the hijack of a Dutch train by South Moluccans in 1975, when psychiatrists swung into action. As soon as they were rescued, the hostages were bundled off the train and on to stretchers. No one asked if they could walk by themselves. They were rushed off to hospital in ambulances. Dr Hans Prins, a biologist, the most vocal of the 23 victims, told me in 1977 that it was "like being hijacked all over again."

After the hijack, the former hostages complained of many small psychological problems but most of all of the belittling psychiatrists who had deemed them severely disturbed, nearly mad, because of their ordeal.

Britain has less faith in psy-

chiatrists, and here attention has focused on how the police behave towards victims of crime, and they have been criticised particularly for their attitude towards women who have been raped.

Dr Joanna Shapland of the Oxford Centre for Criminological Research told this week's London conference of the British Psychological Society that while many forces have learned to handle rape victims more sensitively, most victims soon develop a very jaundiced view of the police.

Funded by the Home Office, Dr Shapland studied 278 victims in Coventry and Northampton. Most had been physically, not sexually, assaulted, and often mugged badly. Their initial impressions of the police were good: 75 per cent praised the "first contact"; officers were not just efficient but, to use that much overused word, caring. One woman who had been sexually abused, not wanted to turn the police into therapists in uniform but feels there is a serious mismatch between what the police think is good practice and what victims feel they need. The police wanted to catch the criminal and, if they could not do that, to be "technically efficient" which often meant filling in the right forms at the right time. But surprisingly

them for up to 18 months afterwards. Even three weeks on, satisfaction with the police had slumped.

Fourteen per cent of victims went so far as to say that if they were assaulted again they would not bother reporting it. Using classic rating scales, Dr Shapland found that victims soon came to rate the police as being significantly "less efficient, more offensive, less fair, more bureaucratic, more crooked, and less helpful." The change was dramatic.

"It's not often that psychology throws up such a common thread," admitted Dr Shapland. "I think we're looking at a real phenomenon."

And, if the Dutch smothered their victims with patronising care, Shapland found that the people in her sample felt, after a few weeks, "just not valued." Shapland does not want to turn the police into therapists in uniform but feels there is a serious mismatch between what the police think is good practice and what victims feel they need. The police wanted to catch the criminal and, if they could not do that, to be "technically efficient" which often meant filling in the right forms at the right time. But surprisingly

victims did not judge the police by whether they catch the villains or not. Arrests matter less than attention.

The psychology of this is not so odd even though it may offend those who claim that victims need retribution and revenge. To be assaulted is bad not just for a person's health but for their self-esteem. They feel damaged. More than ever, therefore, they need to be well treated. Being well treated does not mean being fussed over by sergeant social workers but it should mean being told what is going on at the right time; when a case may come up; if an arrest had been made - and being given all that information with respect. To be denied that reinforces the initial damage.

The problem is that these human needs clash with what the police see as their main role. To be caring when someone is injured is not hard but to continue that care, three weeks later, when they are back home and fit is hardly the role of the great detective or brave constable. Yet Dr Shapland's survey suggests that the victims want and need the policing that is humanly sensitive rather more than detective wizardry. It's not a finding to ignore.

David Cohen

## ALAN FRANKS

# A cartilage torn in my knee



On the nth day of Christmas my third-born gave to me Twelve nights a-broken Eleven times a-woken Ten nappies soaked Nine nasty tokens Eight fags a-smoken Seven yells a-choken Six oaths a-spoken FIVE COLD GRINS Four falling curds Three drenched friends Two hurtled gloves And this job doesn't carry a fee.



On the next day of Christmas my second-born asked of me Twelve knights a-cloaken Eleven birds bespoken (He must be joking) Nine Indians croaking Eight cowboys gloating Seven castles moaten Six dragons smoking FIVE VIKINGS Four mauling words Three henchmen Two hurtful shoves And a cartridge for a 3.3



On the last day of Christmas my first-born meant to me Twelve girls eloping Eleven boys a-hoping Ten padres popping Nine mothers moping Eight granmas coping Seven brothers sloping Five fathers toping FIVE LARGE GINS Four stalling birds Three French men Two puerbal loves And I don't think this job is for me.

## TALKBACK

From Dr Penelope Leach, The Maze House, Rockhampton, Berkeley, Gloucestershire

As a reviewer, Rachel Cullen ("Bringing up baby", December 14) is entitled to express her opinions, and I must therefore ignore charges of authoritarianism, unrecognizable descriptions of "the Penelope Leach approach" and suggestions that I spend my time having the vapours over other women earning a living instead of earning my own.

I cannot, however, ignore Cullen's statement that I am "not above careful editing of the research evidence" to back up my views. The 200 references cited in my book *Babyhood* strike her as showing off, in fact

they are there so that any interested reader can check my sources. I find this aspersion on my professional integrity as a researcher grossly offensive.

Cullen also says that I imply that "childminders are monsters... who will probably tie your child in a chair all day". Far from implying any such calumny, I believe - and have often stated - that most babies and toddlers are better off with the individual care of a good childminder than with the more institutionalized care offered by most day nurseries. Childminders have suffered from sensational reporting by the media; I strongly resent this on their behalf and reject Cullen's attempt to associate me with it.

On balance

From Sue Lewis, 18 Knoll Court, Farquhar Road, London I was interested to read Caroline Harper's "My lesbian daughter" (December 16) and appreciated the frankness with which she shared her personal experience with the wider public, so that all of us might learn from it.

Her daughter had apparently been forward in her relationships with boyfriends during her teens and it occurred to me that she might have been misled out on the close friendships with other girls which most of us enjoyed in early adolescence, only to discover later, when

Male expectations

From George W. Burdett, 85 Henley Road, Leicester Like Doreen Turnbull (First Person, December 12), I sympathize with the large numbers of women whose husbands have died. I think that equal attention should be given to the question, "Why do men have a life expectancy of seven years less than women?" (One man in five will suffer a heart attack before 65).

The existing state pension scheme is weighted against men. Men pay in 80 per cent of the funds and receive 40 per cent in benefits. Earlier retirement (voluntary) for men is clearly desirable and the Government should turn its attention to this matter without delay.

NHS test at all ages

From M C Macnaughton, Muirhead Professor of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, University of Glasgow, Royal Infirmary, 10 Alexandra Parade, Glasgow. Your correspondent, Hilaire Gomer, said in her article on December 7 - with regard to amniocentesis - that "in Britain any anxious mother can obviously have it done privately at any age at a cost of about £150". I must point out that amniocentesis is now advised in most NHS maternity units at age 35 or over, and that any

anxious mother under this age can have it done in an NHS maternity hospital. The reason it is not routinely recommended for women under 35 is that the risk of having a child with Down's Syndrome under this age is less than the risk of the test. It is not true that the test can only be done privately under 35.

Standing alone

From Keith Howes, 42 Lamballe Road, London NW3 Many thanks for the Friday Page article "My lesbian daughter" (December 16). Could we now have "My heterosexual mother", looking at life "highly uncomfortable, slanted and inevitably refracted through a (heterosexual) prism"?

From Lady Murray, British Embassy, Skarpagan 6-8, Stockholm, Sweden Mrs Jacinth Whittaker writing on "Ups and Downs of Life with One Leg" (Friday Page December 2) compares her life to "having a retired husband with none of the advantages. Instead of being cherished in later years, I have all my work and his too."

For the past 34 years I have shared my life with an above-knee amputee, who is now the same age as Mr Whittaker. In the early years he had a number of operations, and still has often pain, discomfort and other problems. But, largely due to his particular approach, our life together has been and still is, almost no different from that of our two-legged friends.

He has never wished me to accompany him to his limb fitter, doctor or prosthetist. These occasions he deals with alone in the same way as he does his very demanding life - though he still sometimes falls over!

My advice to Mrs Whittaker would be to try not to overcompensate; to let her husband try everything he wishes to do alone; to let him decide and encourage him to do so. There are moments of agony waiting - as when my husband insists on skiing. She may well be surprised - as I still am - at the things her husband can and will do on his own.

Perhaps I am lucky. Every time I still have to reply to a third person's question "Which leg is it your husband is missing?" I realize it is his determination to go it alone which makes this question necessary.

I hope that one day soon Mrs Whittaker may find herself being asked the same question.

Pill benefit

From Julia M. Cadman, 16 Newry Park, Chester. At the age of 15 I was prescribed the contraceptive pill at my mother's suggestion and with my doctor's ready agreement. This was not in anticipation of sexual activity, but an attempt to control severe epilepsy. A marked monthly pattern in fits had emerged, such that on the last day of my period seven fits in 24 hours was not uncommon.

As a result of the new treatment, I went for six months without grand mals, and sat and passed all eight "O"-levels I was taking. Had we been a little more aware of my childhood sexuality such treatment might have been lighted upon at an earlier stage, and the relief provided that much the greater.

## An apt Christmas cracker motto for the type who's too mean to serve Smirnoff.

Q) What is the definition of an inexpensive fish?  
A) A cheapskate.

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## THE TIMES DIARY

### Floating campaigner

Paul Genny, who is challenging the election returns of Austin Mitchell, Labour MP for Great Grimsby, seems to change his opinions quite a lot. Genny was Mitchell's agent in the 1979 general election. He then became one of the SDP's earliest converts and unsuccessfully tried to persuade Mitchell to leave the Labour Party. His failure did not seem to result in any hard feelings on his part, for in March 1981 he wrote to the local Labour Party. "You have one of the finest constituency members in the country - take pride in his achievements". In his election address as SDP candidate for Great Grimsby this year, Genny asked: "What has your MP done for you?" The electors obviously thought he had done quite a lot since Mitchell retained his seat, albeit with a greatly reduced majority.

### Literary germs

Secker and Warburg recently received a £300 bill for fumigating copies of James A. Michener's *Plains* which they had shipped to Australia. Peter Grose, the publishing director, replied by Telex: "We accept responsibility for all internal, corrupting, damaging, depraving, maddening, nightmare-inducing or soporific effects of the written word, but transmission of disease takes place outside the covers of the book and is therefore beyond our control and hence not our liability." Back came the reply: "For the entertainment value of Telex almost, repeat almost, tempted to wipe fumigation charges." In the end Grose relented and paid the compulsory fee "in the interests of international goodwill and world health".

### That figures

A colleague who called into a City branch of Wallace Heaton to have the battery in his calculator replaced was told: "Sorry, sir. We don't open up calculators in case they fall to bits."

### Singing praises

At an occasion called Carols for Peace held this week in Chelsea, a choir from the Russian Orthodox Church mingled harmoniously with their more worldly countrymen from the Embassy, and Britons of various political persuasions. A Russian professor who was one of the guests thought that Graham Greene should win the Nobel Literature prize and also divulged that Mr. Andropov's favourite author was Erskine Caldwell, author of those two ironic sagas of the American South, *God's Little Acre* and *Tobacco Road*.

BARRY FANTONI



"Neville will be OK. He hasn't worked anywhere for years"

### Disarming

John Silkin, the chief Opposition spokesman on defence and disarmament, has just been elected president of the Parliamentarians for World Order. This means that he will be out of the country quite a bit for the organization holds meetings every other month in New York as well as regular regional conferences, often abroad. The announcement goes on to stress that Mr Silkin's new job is a very important one. Indeed, packing and unpacking his suitcase will keep the new president so busy that most defence and disarmament issues will now have to be dealt with by Dennis Davies.

### Port both ways

Reproducing paintings for Christmas cards is a busy business. The Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners' Royal Benevolent Society has chosen Canaletto's painting of Westminster Bridge from the North, with Lambeth Palace in the distance. Owing to the printing process, the painting is the wrong way round. "No wonder they get shipwrecked", said one recipient.

### To the point

The Phaeantian in the King's Road, once the haunt of Diaghilev and the Russian Ballet, has gone into receivership. The Receiver hopes very much that the restaurant on the original Phaeantian site will keep going and has already had two offers for them. The fact that the Phaeantian retains their original arch and courtyard is due to the Friends of Chelsea, who stopped an officially-approved skyscraper going up. Their appeal was led by Princess Jane Astor, a granddaughter of the Princess Seraphine Astor, who ran a ballet school at the Phaeantian, and Dame Margot Fonteyn, a former pupil of the school. Luckily, the developer was devoted to the ballet and, invited to lunch with Dame Margot, tore up his original plans on the spot.

PHS

# Terror: let's fight it together

After the Harrods bomb, Garret FitzGerald, the Irish Prime Minister, calls for closer cooperation in combating the IRA killers

As I write, five British families, two in the Irish Republic and one in Northern Ireland have been bereaved by the terrorist violence of the past week. Such is the situation we all face that we must pray that the total may not be higher by the time these words are published.

The Irish people feel this Christmas a stronger sense of shared grief and shared outrage with the British people than at any time I can recall. Our ambassador in London, Mr Noel Dorr, has reported to us that in his hospital visits to the injured victims of last Saturday's bombing he was received warmly and without rancour. Mr Dorr spoke for millions of Irish people in Ireland and, indeed, in Britain in expressing our sympathy and good wishes to those admirable people and our profound horror at the crime which has afflicted them.

It may not be fully understood in Britain that the abhorrence of Irish people at this event is especially strong because the explosion was caused by a man who, with no justification whatever, purport to create enmity between us and the British. For our part I can say that Mrs Thatcher's message to me expressing sympathy to those families of the two members of our security forces killed by the IRA last Friday in the operation which led to the release of the kidnapped Mr Don Tidy, a British citizen, was warmly appreciated here in Ireland. This is therefore a moment of emotional solidarity across the Irish Sea. It is the duty of political leadership now

to ensure that enduring good comes out of these tragedies.

Behind these terrible events, and at the heart of Anglo-Irish relations, lies the extremely complex and intractable political problem of Northern Ireland which we have an overwhelming moral obligation to solve. Any solution will require difficult decisions from each of the protagonists, the British government and political parties, the Irish government and political parties and all non-violent parties in Northern Ireland.

The constitutional Irish national response has been to bring together parties representing 90 per cent of the nationalist voters. North and South, in a New Ireland Forum to seek a path forward towards the objective of peace and stability, seeking ways of reconciling the two Irish traditions.

Within three months we shall know just how successful this initiative has been and whether it can provide a basis for a fresh start in tackling that alienation of Northern nationalists from the political and security processes which underlies the continued violence within, and emanating from, Northern Ireland. To the

extent that the forum comes up with worthwhile ideas that could provide a basis for peace, stability and reconciliation, it will then be for the British government and political leaders to decide whether and how to respond to them.

No one should doubt the will of Irish democratic politicians to tackle the security problems of this island. Whether through the unique process under which IRA terrorists are jailed in the South for crimes of violence or prison escapes in Northern Ireland, for involvement in explosions in Britain, or else through extradition decisions in respect of terrorists like McGlinchey - which was ordered by the Supreme Court last year and is awaiting only his capture - no refuge will begin in our state to any who commit crimes of violence in these islands.

We would ask the British government, political parties and the British public to join with the Irish in a commitment against the gunmen, a commitment to exclude them from a say in our future. That can only mean joining with constitutional politicians in Ireland in a single urgent effort to create structures which will bring peace and real political progress.

The gunmen have been sustained not only by a distorted sense of history but at times by an over-emphasis on security policy at the expense of politics, the impact of which on the ground has contributed to the profound alienation of many among the minority in Northern Ireland. A different and somewhat contrasting error which has encouraged the IRA in particular, and which has been particularly resented by British politicians, has been the series of direct or indirect contacts with the IRA and Sinn Féin on the part of past Secretaries of State and, in one notable instance, of a leader of the Opposition: this has bolstered the gunmen's conviction that by continuing to bomb and to murder, they will eventually prevail politically.

The only convincing way that governments and politicians can now demonstrate their resolution to stand against terrorism is to act urgently and resolutely together on the political front and to exclude rigorously from that effort those who support extremism.

This is what we are trying to do in Ireland. The next step must be that we all do it together. The British and Irish peoples will want to ensure that their innocent dead will not have died in vain. The problems are immense but I believe that our will to succeed, backed by the growing concern of all the people of these two islands, is greater now than ever before.

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## Robert Fisk goes on patrol with the Queen's Royal Lancers

### Beirut, a battle honour these soldiers don't seek

On the wall of the newly-plastered officers' mess at Hadeith, Major J. Roland Smyth is leading his 16th (Queen's Own) Lancers to victory at the Battle of Alwal on January 28, 1846. The faintly-coloured lithograph portrays Major Smyth, a mustachioed figure on a rather bovine horse, galloping along at the head of some ferocious-looking cavalrymen to the horror of fleeing Sikh warriors.

The picture, whose caption gravely records the serious wounds which the major sustained later in the battle, occupies pride of place in the new mess which the officers of the British Army's tiny contingent in Beirut have just been refurbishing.

You could just hear the Lebanese army tanks and the local Shia Muslim militia celebrating the latest ceasefire by shooting at each other at Galerie Semaan, but Lt Alec Campbell was dutifully plastering over the bullet holes and broken picture hooks which the Syrian army left behind in 1982, turning the room into a place fit for the young gentlemen of what is now the 16th/5th Queen's Royal Lancers.

They have, it is true, covered the wooden door with a dreadful red plastic cloth that makes it look like the entrance to a Beirut night club. But Mr Campbell is clearly a dab hand with a crowbar, even his colleagues did disagree about one of the bullet holes in the wall. It was created earlier this month by a gunman who sprayed the British headquarters with automatic fire a few hours after Mr Campbell had been unwise enough to hang two prized 1822 family portraits above the sofa missing the pictures but smashing the antique frames and leaving a gash in the wall.

That particular hole in the wall was part of an attack which caused



Corporal Steve Collingwood of Birmingham, awaiting the action in Beirut: the Royal Lancers have a "cold detachment" about events in Lebanon except where they impinge directly on the British

both Mrs Thatcher and Mr Heseltine some very considerable worries. At Westminster, the Opposition suggested that perhaps the British really had no business in Lebanon.

In the mess at Hadeith, the reaction was somewhat different: Corporal Nichol made off with the spent bullet while Mr Campbell's colleagues very firmly told him not to plaster over the hole. It had to remain there: a memento, a battle honour.

They are very young soldiers, rather clubby in a public school sort of way, although they don't like the public school tag. When they saw a *Private Eye* lampoon suggesting they spent their time playing bridge and listening to the BBC World Service to find out what was going on down the road, they greeted the article with interest but something less than amusement. They do listen to the World Service voraciously but spend much of their time on vehicle checkpoints or endlessly patrolling the same hot, packed streets in Beirut.

Events in Lebanon are treated in a detached, cold fashion except where they directly impinge on the British. You can detect this when Major Robin Faulkner, the Commander of the 16th/5th "A" Squadron, tells you about the shells that traversed the British base a few days ago.

"The first shell landed just over there," he says, pointing down from the roof at an earth pit. "The second landed over there beside the factory. And the others..." Here there is a sharp glance in your direction. "And

the others, I'm glad to say, went on towards Beirut. There is just the faintest trace of a smile.

By contrast, there was consternation in the mess when the BBC reported the bomb explosion at Harrods. Perhaps there has simply been - as yet - no reason for anger over Lebanon, which sometimes seems more like an adventure than a duty. Take Lt David Edie's patrol up the wadi last week. Mr Edie (Eton) calls it the "wadi" although in fact it is a mud track beside the bed of the Beirut river. The sand-coloured Ferrets bump and rock their way through miniature lakes with Edie's head protruding from the leading vehicle until, a round a corner in the gorge, they are facing a massive, broken Roman aqueduct.

While the Ferret crews idle the engines, we climb up the height of the three arches and find a Roman tunnel cut deep into the mountain. Edie climbs inside, rifle in one hand, dust cascading on to his beret. And after a few seconds, an excited shout as he finds another tunnel, a 100ft shaft carved upwards through the solid rock at the time of Caracalla.

But then, as he emerges into the sun, there is a sudden, rushing sound, deafening, and an F-14 jet races up the valley at almost supersonic speed.

Li Edie has developed the disturbing habit of leading his armoured reconnaissance patrols into some of the world's greatest and most inextricable traffic jams. Every side street in East or West Beirut up which Mr Edie turns seems to

envelop his Ferrets in a choking mass of taxis, trucks, lottery vendors and yelling streeturchins from which long-suffering Lebanese policemen attempt to extract him with encouraging asides of the "England good" variety. Trapped in the chaos of the Bourj Hammoud Armenian market, Mr Edie's head emerged from the Ferret and turned towards us. "I hope you're not in any kind of a hurry," he shouted.

Despite the setting, the radio identification codes are extremely English. The commanding officer is "Sunny", the doctor is "Starlight", the watchkeeper is invariably "Mushroom". The Lebanese army is inevitably "Cedar", Sunny is Lt-Col Gordon Ferguson of the Queen's Dragoon Guards, one of the cocktail of "other regiments" that are attached to the Lancers in Beirut.

Colonel Ferguson has a pretty shrewd idea just how dangerous the British patrols could turn out to be.

The 16th/5th went to Lurgan in 1980 - Beirut is less boring, they say - but they don't talk much about Ireland.

Mention regimental history, however, and Lt Campbell produces a small volume and begins reading aloud from it for a very long time, on and on about Alwal and a junior officer dying with 16 wounds whose last thought is to encourage the Lancers.

He knows the battle honours by heart: Malplaquet, Oudenard, Blenheim, Mons, Flanders... If the 16th/5th are lucky, Lebanon will never be among them.

For some, talk of word diamonds will be less than convincing since most modern crosswords are square. The *Wide Awake Pleasure Book* of 1887 has what is possibly the first square "hollow" arrangements.

Prize Cross-Word Square (note the modern crosswords are square). The puzzle consists of a five by five square with three Across and three Down clues with all the answers five-lettered. For the first correct solution the puzzle editor, one Kit Clinton offered "a nice chromo".

Alas, no one claimed the prize. But looking at the actual clues, one is not exactly surprised. Some words were probably more familiar than now but many of the words are obscure. But to the modern puzzler, what is more daunting than obscurity is the use of general categories rather than precise definitions, which was customary at the time. Nevertheless, unlike some word squares offered to St Nicholas four years earlier, it was apparently judged not too difficult by the editor.

If these early crosswords appear small by modern standards, it is worth recalling that the first one published in this country, in 1924, was only seven by seven, and the five by five puzzle has been featured by *Gambles* magazine in recent years.

What then remains unique to the modern crossword? The small reference numbers and the black squares? Not all countries use them and certainly not all the time. So, for the moment, it would seem that the crossword dates back from at least the 1870s. Somewhere there is an earlier crossword, waiting to be found.

Kenneth Miller

The holiday Jumbo crossword will be published tomorrow.

Simon Jenkins

## The top shops that stay closed

Monopolies, someone once said, are like babies. We are against them, until we have one of our own. A government minister robustly declared last week that the future of the closed shop was at last in jeopardy. In ringing tones, he declared that such restrictions were a "flagrant and fundamental denial of individual liberties... not only morally wrong but deeply damaging to the economy and jobs."

Morally wrong? Why then, in the past month, has the same government acted to protect from deregulation two closed shops - those of stockbrokers and of conveyancing solicitors? The pressure placed on ministers was uncannily similar to that of "working-class" trade unions on a Labour government. Constituency parties leaned on their MPs. There were lobbies at Parliament (discreet, mass ones). Members would murmur "crisis of professional conscience" to those fathers confessors of the body politic, the whips.

With all the passion of a Joe Wade, stockbrokers and solicitors alike argued the adjustments they had already made to the twin totems of Thatcherism, new technology and market forces. They pleaded the problems of adjustment. They pleaded hard cases. They pleaded social benefits from their monopolies. Only let the government protect them from the Office of Fair Trading and Austin Mitchell's House Buyer's Bill. So far they have won.

What is so defensible about middle-class unionism, but evil about the working-class variety? Why is a government ideologically committed to rooting out all and every monopoly so ready to conform to Marxism's stereotype of Tory class rule?

Myth and reality in British government remains an opaque topic. The Wilson and Callaghan administrations drew ideological inspiration from economic planning, growth and higher welfare spending. Yet in retrospect, these things seem a series of tawdry concessions to Labour's trade union backers. As ministers wrestled with the Protection of Employment Bill and countless public spending reviews, the reality was higher wages for public sector monopoly unions and greater legal privileges for private sector ones.

Mrs Thatcher's government presented itself as equally rational in its policy motivation. Markets were the engines of economic efficiency and must simply be allowed to work. Deregulation, privatization and legislation against restrictive practices were matters not for the heart but for the head. They were the keys to the ladder of Tory economic prosperity. And as proof of Mrs Thatcher's determination, the new "cabinet of loners" would be secure against the pork-barrel, old-boy network which had made past administrations so prey to interest-group pressure. The government would do what was right, not what its supporters wanted. So we were told.

It was never going to be thus. From the upper-band tax cuts of 1979 through the company cars subsidy (now at £2 billion) to the increase in mortgage tax relief, a concern to protect the party's predominant interest among mid-

dle-class and middle-income groups has dominated ideology. Every year, Treasury officials pursuing what they thought to be the implications of a reduced subsidy economy have found the Cabinet adhering firmly to the maxim that middle-class subsidies are no sin.

Meanwhile, the farmer and the lawyer still stand like Gog and Magog glaring down on the deliberations of this Tory cabinet as they have done on all its predecessors. The Downing Street floor still trembles should any minister, especially from the Treasury, dare to trespass on their hallowed soil. Farmers are the one group a government can (through the CAP and manipulation of the green pound) protect from recession. The rate of increase in farm incomes over the past few years has been publicized enough in these columns. History will surely judge it one of the most extraordinary acts of political protection offered to any income group by any government since the war.

Lawyers likewise remain secure behind their myriad restrictive practices. The planning bar luxuriates in a fee structure (much of it at taxpayers' expense) which the government has done nothing to reform.

It is a feature of middle-class restrictive practices that their practitioners are articulate as well as politically potent in their defence. Thus we are told the solicitors (or architects or accountants) closed shops are necessary to protect the public. They are a guarantee of quality. If high earnings result, they are due reward for the grind of apprenticeships. Lengthy training is not to provide cheap labour to ease the lifestyle of senior professionals; nor is it just the way all trade unions restrict supply to maintain earnings. It is a safeguard for the customer and an essential experience for the job.

Perhaps. But have we not heard all this from train drivers and electricians in defence of their restrictive practices? Have we not heard it from the Post Office engineers - and we ridiculed it. Surely monopoly is monopoly, a conspiracy against the consumer. This Tory government claimed a mandate to fight monopoly. It has declared war on the trade union variety (though how many union closed shop members are now marginal Tory voters?). It has likewise pursued business and industry through the Office of Fair Trading and the Monopolies Commission. But industry is no favourite of modern Toryism.

No, the traditional interests of post-war Toryism, the land and the professions, are clear of blame for any of Britain's shortcomings. Mrs Thatcher, whose signal virtue is at least a consciousness of her mandate, has occasionally argued with her colleagues that these interests should be cut down to size. So far, she has argued in vain. A shrewd minister will still insist that the closed shops and restrictive practices of his supporters, their protective legislation and covert subsidies, are cement to the fabric of British society, the underpinning of the establishment. Tory monopolies must never die.

The author is Political Editor of *The Economist*.

Philip Howard

## Enough legend to fill a stocking

Here we go again, then.

The time draws near the birth of Christ: The moon is hid, the night is still: The Christmas bells from hill to hill lower each other in the mist.

Either we have all the walnuts and tangerines and Disney toys we are going to need, or it is late to do anything about it. It is time to get out the long, hairy Lovat hose. My mother-in-law has been waging an unsuccessful campaign for 20 years to dress me like an Edwardian country gent in loud tweed knickerbockers. Here comes the night of the year when the gigantic stockings come in useful.

Tomorrow is, of course, not really the night of Santa Claus, to use the name that Dutch and German immigrants to America gave St Nicholas. His night is December 6. And his connexion with kiddies is tenuous. The belief that the fourth-century Bishop of Myra restored to life three small boys who had been carved up and pickled as pork, so demonstrating his love for children, is based on a misunderstanding of pictures showing him having three grown men released from a tower prison.

His three golden balls (St Nicholas is the patron saint of pawnbrokers and Russia, as well as of spoiling children) come from the legend that he threw three bags of gold through a window as dowries to save three poor girls from a fate worse than death.

Though Nicholas is one of the most popular saints in both the Greek and the Latin churches, almost nothing is known about him. According to tradition, he was Bishop of Myra, a rundown diocese in Asia Minor. He is said to have been imprisoned for his faith during the persecution of the Christians under Diocletian, and to have been present at the Council of Nicea, where he denounced Arianism. Do not believe the last claim. His name is not included in any of the early lists of bishops present at the council; nor does Athanasius refer to Nicholas in his voluminous and polemical writings.

Nicholas first emerges from legend into history in the Church of St Priscus and St Nicholas, founded

at Constantinople by the Emperor Justinian. He became a popular cult figure in the west after the inhabitants of Bari claimed to have got hold of some bits and pieces of his relics in 1087.

No: if we are going to be canonical, tomorrow is St Irminda's Night. (Who she? Ed.)

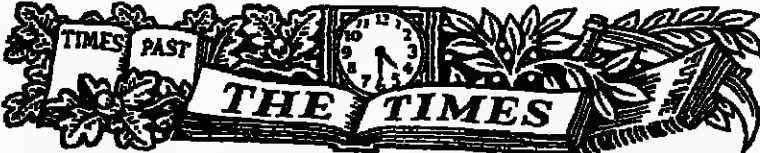
Irminda is not one of your first-division saints; but neither is she one of your rapscallion saints, who ought to have been cannonized. Irminda comes about halfway down the Southern League, just above Basingstoke. Her story is really more suitable for an operatic heroine, in something by Verdi or Bellini, than for pieties in stained glass.

She was the daughter of Dagobert, King of the Franks at the turn of the sixth century, and wildly in love with the guy next door, a German called Hermann. She was on her way to Treves to marry Count Hermann, when a young man called Edgar, who was travelling in her wedding party, fell head over heels in love with her.

Edgar galloped on ahead of the Frankish party, and told Hermann that there was a foreign merchant in the district from whom he could buy a remarkable jewel as a surprise wedding present for Irminda. He lured the silly Count up to a high rock overlooking the Moselle, and grappled with him until they both fell to their deaths. I can hear the opportunity for a pretty tempestuous tenor and bass duet at this point; and I can imagine the same difficulties of stage-management that face the producer in the last Act of *Tosca*.

The end of the story is quieter. Irminda immediately took the veil and became a nun in the convent at Treves, where Daddy Dagobert founded for her. She helped the Goedic Saint Willibrord in his missionary work, and gave him the land on which he founded the famous Echternach Monastery in Luxembourg. She died in 707. That's the Saint of Christmas Eve, not Santa Claus. And now, Irminda, dear girl, let us about our annual business. You carry the stockings, and I shall carry the stuff to put in them. Happy Christmas.





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# THE POUND IN YOUR PURSE

Until Mrs Thatcher got to her feet to answer parliamentary questions for the last time before Christmas, everyone in what are conventionally called government circles who felt entitled to have an informed opinion on the future of the pound note had no doubts about the policy for it. The note was heading for oblivion and for total replacement by the new one pound coin. What is more, its life-span was not expected to be long. The bureaucrats who determine these matters know their public's ingrained conservatism and dislike of newfangledness but they also know that what the public hates today it loves, when time has worked its miracle, tomorrow. They did not suppose that much more than a year would be required to see the new pound coin as firmly accepted as the once disliked 50 pence piece now is, after which the last tattered notes could be incinerated.

Then Mrs Thatcher spoke, and not for the first time did a little policy-making on her feet. Responding to a backbench Conservative defender of the one pound note, the Prime Minister accepted that the equivalent coin was not popular. "I have reason to believe," she added cryptically, "that the one pound note will be retained", and she left it at that.

What that reason was she did not divulge, but its identity is hardly obscure. It was her own instinctive reaction to the change. Mrs Thatcher, as well as being Prime Minister, also makes a point of being (so far as time allows) a housewife with a shopping-bag. She therefore knows what it is to juggle with a purseful of assorted coins, up to a maximum of eight denominations, none of which presents any logical relationship between size and value. What is more, she is presumably aware from experience that, to the eyes of the over-forties who have come to need reading-glasses, a fistful of 5 pence, 20 pence and £1 pieces are not easily distinguishable in a

poor light. Besides, though something of a radical in policy terms, Mrs Thatcher is also in practice a traditionalist: it would not, therefore, be surprising if she felt a certain affection for the old pound note for the sake of what it did before the demon inflation did its dirty work. Inflation is, of course, the reason for the one pound coin. With the pound's loss of value, the notes are already treated as coins and loose change. They no longer repose clean and crisp in wallets, produced for occasional use; instead they are stuffed in pockets, waistcoats and purses, quickly becoming filthy and crumpled. Their old dignity is destroyed. What is more, the fact that they are treated as pseudo-coins actually makes it harder to replace them with clean new notes. When notes circulate more through the banks, the banks could send them back to the Bank of England for new ones when they became soiled. Now they go round and round as loose change between different pockets and purses, and the banks have much less chance to send them back before they become disgusting. Even so, their life is not more than about 10 months before they have to be replaced. Coins are more economical for the job and comparing the cost of producing coins with the cost of producing notes over the forty-year span which is the life-time of a coin, several hundreds million pounds would be saved, at present values, by shifting entirely to pound coins.

For all these good and logical reasons, the Treasury which has responsibility in these matters had no doubt about what would happen until its First Lord took it by surprise yesterday. The sweetness of certainty pervaded the answers of Lord Glenarthur when he was questioned on the subject in the Lords on Tuesday. It was one of those occasions when the Upper House demonstrates that its claim to the virtual representation of those who did not elect it is not far short of the claim of 18th century MPs sitting for rotten

boroughs virtually to represent those who did not elect them. The Lords spoke for ordinary people, pointing to the unpopularity of the new coin, and instructing the government spokesman on its tendency to wear out pockets and purses.

He (who normally speaks for Health and Social Security as that department's under-secretary) answered with the full confidence of a junior minister who has the power of Whitehall behind him. "It is the Government's intention to withdraw the £1 note from circulation in due course once the public have had time to become accustomed to the £1 coin." He rejected the idea of a plastic £1 note as too forageable, as did the Economic Secretary to the Treasury, Mr Ian Stewart, on a Commons adjournment motion the same night. Asked if he was sure that people wanted the new coin Lord Glenarthur remarked that "extensive consultations" had established the demand for it, adding mysteriously that his own private survey round their Lordships' House had found that it was "50-50 in favour".

Had Mr Stewart and Lord Glenarthur been able to consult the Prime Minister they would apparently have discovered that her mind had been made up on the subject for some time, even though she had not thought to mention it until yesterday. The note, it seems will be with us for the foreseeable future, which means as long as people want it. The likelihood is that it will be wanted, as an option, until the whole range of the coinage has been re-assessed. Pockets full of heavy large 10 pence pieces of low value, together with small light 20 pence pieces, and small heavy pounds makes no sense, except to those hoping that someone will make a mistake with his change. The Treasury, together with the Bank of England and the Mint (its agents for notes and coins respectively) are thinking about it, and the Prime Minister's opinion on the subject ought to be very useful to them at an early stage of their general consultations.

## HOMES FOR SALE - OR RENT?

The right of sitting tenants in ordinary council houses and flats to buy their homes is a stout principle. Its application in the past three years has been a boon to hundreds of thousands of families from municipal tenure of a type which the passage of time and the growth of incomes had rendered obsolete. The principle, however, is still observed only in the breach by sundry Labour-controlled city councils which - difficult as their housing is to make attractive for sale - have done everything short of law-breaking to discourage tenants: in debates on the Housing and Building Control Bill this week Mr Gow made a welcome promise to keep up the pressure on local authorities for which collective provision is the highest good.

Yet the right to buy is not, as the government appears to think, a universal one, to be compromised neither by fiscal common sense nor the state's duty to deal justly between social groups and generations. A right to buy need not encompass a right to extremely generous discounts - gifts of public money. The newly-tabled clauses to the Housing Bill offering a cash hand-out to the tenants of charitable housing associations will need very careful examination in the House of Lords,

whose members have shown themselves to have a keen eye for fairness: the government rightly wants to help this particular group of tenants but is a reduction in the money for housing associations the way? The government's enthusiasm has now led it to apply the right to buy to the many council properties occupied by the elderly or disabled which are neither "ordinary" dwellings nor can be described as purpose-built. They may be bungalows which are easy of access by people who cannot manage stairs: flats where ramps have been built or those with bathrooms converted for the use of the infirm. The 1980 Housing Act left the status of such dwellings unclear and Mr Gow is in no doubt right to condemn those councils which have jury-rigged an interim system between flats occupied by elderly people then passed them off as specialized accommodation in a bid to escape the right to buy. But there remains doubt over whether the government has thought through the consequences of declaring that accommodation for the elderly belongs to the general stock.

One consequence must surely be a reluctance on the part of councils to continue what in many areas has been good work

in building imaginative units useful for elderly occupants but not to be classified as "sheltered" (that is, where a warden is resident) and so exempt from purchase. Another could be the loss of dwellings containing specialized equipment if, as Mr Gow said he intended, elderly tenants buy and are succeeded by able-bodied inheritors; for councils then to purchase these dwellings would involve a substantial loss of public money and an unwarranted capital gift to undeserving beneficiaries of the tenants' estate.

The Housing and Building Control Bill has not had a happy provenance. Before the election the House of Lords threw out a key clause on the right of tenants of charitable housing associations; since then, the government has slipped in important exchanges at obscure stages. Now it goes to the Lords again and again it deserves a thorough examination. The duties and responsibilities of local authorities to provide housing for the elderly are of long standing; it is a role in which Mr Gow himself has encouraged them. There are strong reasons of public finance and social need for the Lords to consider very carefully this week's amendments extending an otherwise sound principle to a special and vulnerable group.

## Called to account

From Mr A. J. Huxlin  
Sir, I write as a former Deputy Secretary-General who served the Commonwealth Secretariat for over seven years under two Secretaries-General until 1978. I read your editorial "Called to account" of December 2 with much concern because it is so obviously based on lack of information or understanding of the rules and procedures which govern the working of the secretariat.

There is a full measure of accountability. The secretariat is under constant scrutiny by the finance committee, consisting of all the 29 Commonwealth High Commissioners in London and a representative of the British Government, who approve the annual budget and also conduct a half-yearly review, after an eleven-member finance sub-committee has examined every aspect of expenditure in minute detail. In addition, there is a wider ranging review by senior officials of the Commonwealth every two years, triennial reviews of salaries and allowances, and special reviews of the secretariat's objectives and priorities - there being two such in 1982, one of management structure and establishment, and another of classification, which have been progressively implemented in 1983. It is well recognized in the Commonwealth that its secretariat is cost effective. It is equally wrong to say that "its senior appointments smack of an old boy network", or owe little to

competitive selection procedures. The two seniormost posts, like that of the Secretary-General, are elective: the rest are within the discretion of the Secretary-General, but he acts in accordance with general principles laid down in the agreed memorandum of 1965 by Heads of Commonwealth governments.

The most important principle is equitable geographical distribution. The vacancies in diplomatic positions are circulated to Commonwealth governments, and the semi-diplomatic and senior secretariat positions are circulated to High Commissioners. Since Commonwealth governments have plenty of officials seeking experience and service in an international secretariat, there is keen competition for posts, and the Secretary-General cannot ignore consideration of such requests coming from Commonwealth governments. It is, therefore, both inaccurate and unfair to write of "judicious patronage in senior appointments". More generally, such authority as has been delegated by Commonwealth governments to the Commonwealth Secretary-General in the matter of appointments is no more than has been delegated to the United Nations Secretary-General and the directors-general of the specialized agencies. All this is quite easily ascertainable. One wonders why you chose to ignore it in so vigorous an attack on the secretariat two days after the successful Commonwealth meeting in New Delhi and the unanimous decision of Commonwealth leaders

to invite the Secretary-General to serve a further term. Yours faithfully, AZIM HUSAIN, 14 Lytton Close, NZ.

## Oxford admissions

From Dr D. C. Potts  
Sir, The Headmistress of Harrogate Grammar School (December 9) is only the latest in a line of distinguished heads whose letters to you show a total misapprehension of Oxford's new admissions policy, inasmuch as they assume that there will no longer be any place for seventh-term candidates. The university's Admissions Office has made it quite clear that it is not seventh-term entry which is being abolished, but the seventh-term written examination. In its place, from December, 1985, onwards, seventh-term candidates will be asked to show their papers orally in a scrutiny of their abilities which will inevitably be more probing academically than the present interview which complements written papers. There is no reason why Mrs Dance's dedicated staff should not prepare their pupils for this just as effectively as they have been doing for the written examination, and for every reason, given the increasing importance in the modern world of verbal communication skills, for them to regard it as a challenge well worth meeting. Yours faithfully, D. C. POTTS, Keble College, Oxford.

## Fear of restriction on video

From the Editor of the Common Market Law Reports

Sir, The present Government has, rightly and successfully, been encouraging this country to embrace new information technology. And yet it does not seem to be aware of the harm that will be caused to that development by two Bills at present before Parliament. The Data Privacy Bill requires virtually all computerized databases to be registered and supervised; the exceptions are opposed by left-wing reformists. The Video Recordings Bill requires virtually all videotapes and videocassettes to be registered and censored; the exceptions are opposed by right-wing reformists. If these two Bills pass into law the whole range of electronic publishing and information services will be subjected to control by state organs in a manner not seen in this country since the Tudor licensing of the printing press.

As usual, the restrictions are introduced to meet perfectly valid fears, but in both cases the remedy is much broader and more dangerous to our liberties than is necessary. The video censorship Bill in particular gives vast unfettered powers to the Government which could easily be misused in the future: videos of *The Day After*, for instance, would be subject to pre-censorship.

The procedures and associated costs involved in complying with these new laws will bear particularly heavily on small businesses with their scant resources available to cope with such requirements. Video sales have been seen by many as a means of freeing us from the present restrictive patterns of film distribution, but the Bill will give added strength to the traditional film industry methods. In particular, the supply of cultural films and small quantity imports will be made very difficult.

The two Bills merge together in the new area of videopublishing on laser discs and computer tapes. There are already signs that Standing Committee C may require interactive computer material to be subjected to video censorship. Video encyclopaedias and videojournals are unlikely to escape scot-free, in spite of the "information, education or instruction" clause.

This is not a plea for video nasties or invasions of privacy. It is, however, an urgent warning to beware of the consequences of what, with the best of motives, we are now embarking upon.

Yours faithfully, NEVILLE MARCH HUNTINGS, Editor, Common Market Law Reports, European Law Centre Limited, 4 Bloomsbury Square, WC1, December 17.

## Jobs in Gibraltar

From Mr Michael J. Burnett

Sir, There could hardly have been a more inappropriately titled leader than that of December 13 headed "Gift horse on the Rock".

Firstly, Gibraltar is entering the ship repairing market at a time when virtually no ship repair yards, including those of British Shipbuilders, are profitable. Neighbouring regional shipyards at Cadiz, Huelva and Lisbon are heavily subsidised, have lower unit labour costs, and possess the same benefits of location which you ascribe to Gibraltar.

Secondly, the considerable over-capacity in world merchant fleets has led to many governments (and the EEC Commission) financing the scrapping of old ships and the rebuilding of new ships of more appropriate capacity, thus reducing the potential repair market. Thirdly, your leader ignores the possibility of the Spanish government applying clandestine commercial pressure to shipping lines not to use Gibraltar as a means of pursuing their territorial claim to the Rock.

Within such a short period of transition the commercially managed shipyard in Gibraltar has very little chance of becoming profitable and thus of absorbing those currently employed in the dockyard (4.4 per cent of the total labour force) let alone of mopping up, as you suggest, unemployed construction workers.

Without employment in the dockyard the retail sector will be further squeezed in addition to the estimated loss of some £28m per year of expenditure (11 per cent of GNP) arising from the dismantling practised by the Spanish authorities in their restricted opening of the land frontier. Your leader has laid the ground for any failure of the commercialised yard to be attributed to trade union inflexibility, or the lack of determination to succeed of the Gibraltarians as a whole. With the continued economic restrictions from Spain, perhaps the dockyard proposals would be better described as a Trojan horse. Yours faithfully, MICHAEL J. BURNETT, Members' Room, The Town Hall, Wandsworth High Street, SW18.

## Too chilling

From Sir Peter Vaneck, MEP for Cleveland (Conservative)

Sir, Your letters headline on Friday, "Chilling prospect of a nuclear winter" (December 16), is too unilaterally depressing. Thanks to the expanding use of nuclear power, all Europe, at any rate, can confidently switch on light and heat from cheap non-pollutant electricity sources to counter winter's dark and cold.

We should count our blessings as well as our worries. Yours faithfully, PETER VANECK, Centre Européen, Plateau du Kirchberg, Boite postale 1601, Luxembourg, December 17.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Too high a price for the job in hand?

From the Director of the Low Pay Unit

Sir, You argue (leading article, December 20) that wages councils, which set legal minimum rates of pay for nearly three million of the lowest paid and largely non-unionised workers, "tend to price young people out of jobs" and should be abolished. Before following your counsel, ministers would be wise to ask themselves why it is, therefore, that youth unemployment has risen most sharply since the mid-1970s, a period in which the earnings of young people relative to adults have fallen. They should also examine the success of the Young Workers Scheme (YWS), which must surely be the litmus test of the wage-cutting strategy for job creation.

The scheme is designed explicitly to cut the wages of young people: employers receive a subsidy of £1.5 a week for each young person they employ at wages of less than £42 a week. There is no requirement to provide training or even demonstrate that they have taken on new youngsters. The only condition is that they pay low wages.

YWS has been undeniably successful in cutting young people's wages. Indeed, in some cases employers are receiving a subsidy because they are paying wages below wages council legal minimum rates. But how successful has the scheme been in creating new jobs?

Last week the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee reported that 77 per cent of the jobs subsidised under YWS would have existed anyway and that the few new jobs created cost the Exchequer £3.35 each. Most employers simply cut the wages of young people they already employ, or replace older workers with youngsters. By the test of the Young Workers Scheme the wage-cutting strategy has been a dismal failure in creating new jobs. Nor does the recent research

paper produced by the Department of Employment, from which your editorial seeks to draw support, provide convincing evidence in favour of job creation through lower wages. The report suggests that a 10 per cent cut in youth pay would result in 70,000 to 100,000 jobs for young people. Yet four fifths of these jobs would be created at the expense of adult workers and the researchers admit that even these results "are extremely tenuous and should only be used as a possible indication of the factors at work."

There is therefore little evidence to support your assertion that the wages councils have priced young people - or for that matter anyone else - out of work. Indeed, the abolition of the councils could lead to a competitive spiral of wage undercutting in which firms and jobs were lost, not created.

Firms who compete on the basis of efficiency, design and the quality of product, would find themselves undermined by those less efficient who are prepared to compete on the basis of cheap labour. By maintaining fair competition between employers wages councils provide a measure of stability which allows firms to plan ahead and to invest in training or improved techniques, resulting in greater productivity.

This Churchill, who established the minimum wage system in 1909, did so for the reason that "good conditions make for industrial efficiency and increase rather than decrease competitive power." That is why many employers, as well as trade unions, will oppose your proposal to abolish the wages councils. In their industries, minimum wages are not a matter of restrictive practice, but a basis of good employment practice. Yours sincerely, CHRIS POND, Director, Low Pay Unit, 9 Poland Street, W1, December 20.

### A journalist's 'duty'

From Sir Alec Atkinson

Sir, On December 17 you tell us that rather than disclose the source of a confidential report it is "usually the duty of a journalist... to say nothing and take the consequences, which may in the last resort include imprisonment for contempt".

On the other hand, on December 14, in connection with the NGA dispute, you welcomed a statement by Mr Kinnoch that "he did not condone breaches of the law". Wherein lies the difference?

Yours faithfully, ALEC ATKINSON, Bleak House, The Drive, Belmont, Sutton, Surrey.

### House Buyers Bill

From Professor D. G. Barnsley

Sir, Anyone reading the House Buyers Bill will immediately notice one glaring omission. Nowhere is there any requirement that a "licensed conveyancer" needs to have any relevant legal training or even a rudimentary understanding of land law, contract or conveyancing principles.

There is a real danger that the public will assume that the issue of a licence implies a minimum standard of competence. This will not be so. It is difficult to see how the Consumers' Association can actively support the passing of legislation which will facilitate the undertaking of legal work for gain by persons having no legal knowledge or skills. The decision to entrust untrained conveyancers on the general public stands in stark contrast to their recent warnings to householders about the dangers of employing inexperienced plumbers (see the September 1983, issue of *Which?*). Will the untrained, albeit licensed, conveyancer know how to draft the contract for sale so as to discharge the vendor's legal duty of disclosure? Will he appreciate the purport of the standard form conditions of sale

employed in conveyancing transactions? Will the purchaser's adviser understand the underlying significance of the declaration in the widely used Land Registry Form 19(JP) that the survivor of joint transferees "can/cannot give a valid receipt for capital money...?" Will he be aware of facts of other considerations that may in a particular case render it desirable to create a beneficial tenancy in common, so deleting the word "can" from the declaration? And what if one party fails to complete on the agreed date? Serving a notice to complete can be a tricky business, as solicitors have sometimes discovered.

These are only some aspects of a typical transfer that the "licensed conveyancer" will encounter. That the solicitors' monopoly in routine conveyancing matters can no longer be justified is certainly debatable. To throw open registered conveyancing to any untrained and inexperienced person is quite indefensible. Yours faithfully, D. G. BARNSELEY, Faculty of Law, The University, Leicester, December 14.

### Mosley and Germany

From Mr James Ennis

Sir, In your report (December 13) of the interrogation of Sir Oswald Mosley on July 2, 1940, he is reported as saying: "I do not believe among my own supporters there are any who would even sympathise with Germany in a struggle against this country". This contention is simply not true. Within an hour of the declaration of war the crew of a German freighter, berthed in West India Docks, were marched by an escort of the Metropolitan Police and the 2nd Battalion of the London Scottish, to Thames Police Court, in Arbrook Square, from where they were later transferred to internment. On the way to the court they passed through Salmon Lane, a notorious fascist area with a thriving BUF shop.

The local residents cheered them and encouraged them enthusiastically as if they were a victorious football team. I saw and heard the entire incident. I am also credibly informed (although I was not present on the occasion) that, when Winston Churchill visited Bethnal Green after an air raid, he was loudly booed in Green Street, another notorious fascist area, in which the local BUF headquarters had earlier been situated. The above two incidents, to my knowledge, were not representative of the East End of London as a whole, but they are enough to refute Mosley's contention. Yours faithfully, JAMES ENNIS, Caledonian Club, 9 Halkin Street, SW1.

### Aid for the small businessman

From Lord Wilson of Rievaulx

Sir, Your note on page 21 of *The Times* for December 16 ("Why small businesses don't grow into big businesses") is timely and much needed. The Small Business Research Trust is clearly doing valuable work.

At the political and governmental level there remains one important proposal of the Committee to Review the Functioning of the Financial Institutions (Cann 7937 of June, 1980) on which so far no action has been taken.

Lloyd George, it will be recalled, at the time of his controversial "People's Budget" of 1909, established Cosira - the Council for Small Industries in Rural Areas.

Our review committee proposed that a similar council to assist small industries in urban areas (Cosurba) be established, and this was formally proposed in the Commons debate on the report.

A Conservative MP with City experience in his youth, followed by a period working in financial institutions in New York, had won a place in the Friday ballot and took the City inquiry report as his subject. I followed him with an account of our proposals. Unfortunately there has been no Government action aimed at endorsing our recommendations.

Many of our biggest firms began as small enterprises - for example Unilever, which began with the brothers boiling up soap in their mother's kitchen.

Today, with well over four million unemployed, if we include those without jobs who retired early with their pension fund entitlements, and two if not three generations of school-leavers subsisting - for a time - on Government work schemes, the case for giving effect to Cosurba is stronger than ever, and the Government should now take action to make its committee's proposal a reality. Yours etc, LORD WILSON OF RIEVAULX, House of Lords.

### Preserving buildings

From Mr Clive Aslet

Sir, Sir John Summerson (article December 17) is puzzled by arguments for preserving buildings which do not depend on purely architectural merit. But such arguments have a long pedigree and were advanced with eloquence by Vanbrugh in his memorandum on the preservation of Woodstock Manor, dated June 1, 1709.

Buildings of distant times, wrote the architect of Blenheim, "... move more lively and pleasing Reflections (than History without their aid can do) on the Persons who have inhabited them; on the remarkable things which have been transacted in them, or the extraordinary occasions of erecting them."

By contrast, the position of the architectural historian discriminating about excellence of design is comparatively modern. There is surely every reason why buildings which people have come to know and love over the years, and which lend a sense of stability and permanence to their neighbourhood, should be preserved, even when experts disagree on whether they are masterpieces on the highest intellectual plane. Yours faithfully, CLIVE ASLET, Honorary Secretary, The Thirds Society, 3 Park Square West, NW1.

### Rail archive disposal

From Mr Gerry Burt

Sir, In answer to Dr P. W. Lewis (December 17), the Railway Board's policy is to offer all historical records to the Public Record Office, where the bulk of this material is now kept, or to the National Railway Museum. Dr Lewis is entirely wrong therefore in implying that the original Brunel drawings will be disposed of "in a cavalier fashion". Whether or not the Public Record Office need the assistance of a working party in reaching a decision on the acceptance of specific records must be for them to judge.

In dealing with the national railway archives, I can assure you that the Railways Board acts in a responsible manner, tempered only by the constraints imposed by shortage of money and the need to reduce rather than add to its staff numbers. Yours sincerely, GERRY BURT, Chief Secretary, British Railways Board, Euston Square, PO Box 100, NW1, December 21.

### Lines of beauty

From Mr Jeremy Montagu

Sir, A recent letter (December 9) advocated the planting of evenly spaced avenues of trees along motorways. We should remember that it was such an avenue that cost us the life of the greatest horn player of our time, Dennis Brain. The regular and inexorable "A, B, C" as one drives through such an avenue has a powerful hypnotic effect, especially when one is tired from a day's work and a long journey. There is enough mayhem on our motorways already without introducing new hazards. I remain, Sir, your obedient servant, JEREMY MONTAGU, 171 Iliffe Road, Oxford, December 21.

### Slim defiance

From Lord O'Neill of the Maine

Sir, If the Americans are happy with a paper dollar, worth less than our pound, why should we be unhappy with our pound note? Yours faithfully, O'NEILL OF THE MAINE, House of Lords, December 21.





## COURT AND SOCIAL

### COURT CIRCULAR

**BUCKINGHAM PALACE**  
December 22: The Reverend Professor Owen Chadwick had the honour of being received by the Queen when Her Majesty invested him with the insignia of a Member of the Order of Merit.

### Forthcoming marriages

**Captain R. G. Carr, RAMC and Dr J. E. Baldwin**  
The engagement is announced between Robin, eldest son of Mr and Mrs R. H. M. Carr, of Great Amwell, Hertfordshire, and Jane, daughter of Mr and Mrs J. L. E. Baldwin, of Chesham, Bucks.

**Mr N. P. Cusis and Miss S. J. Adair**  
The engagement is announced between Nigel Peter, only son of Mr and Mrs J. S. Cusis, of Sandstead, Surrey, and Sarah Jane, only daughter of Mr and Mrs J. D. Adair, of Bromley, Kent, and Wickwar, Gloucestershire.

**Mr M. St. J. Day and Miss J. G. Dickson**  
The engagement is announced between Mark, eldest son of Lieutenant-Colonel and Mrs M. G. Day, of Pudding, Yorkshire, and Janet, daughter of Captain and Mrs D. Dickson, of Jordanhill, Glasgow.

**Mr P. D. Gladwell and Miss T. J. Woodward**  
The engagement is announced between Peter, son of Mr and Mrs Michael Gladwell, of Lower Upton, Southampton, and Tracy, daughter of Mr and Mrs Geoffrey Morris, of Haddington, East Lothian.

**Mr A. M. Gellie and Miss M. A. Hatchison**  
The engagement is announced between Ayodeji Malcom, son of Professor and Mrs Harold Gellie, of Hamilton, Ontario, and Margaret Ann, daughter of Mr and Mrs Michael Hatchison, of Richmond, Surrey.

**Mr M. J. H. Littlejohn and Miss I. A. Paschetta**  
The engagement is announced between Mark Littlejohn, of Highgate, London, and Isabelle Paschetta, of Nice, France.

**Mr P. T. Mallory and Miss F. G. Neville-Rofe**  
The engagement is announced between Peter, son of the Rev R. and Mrs De Witt Mallory, of New York City, and Frances, daughter of Mr and Mrs Edmund Neville-Rofe, of Tisbury, Wiltshire.

**Mr E. J. Milne and Miss W. E. Feather**  
The engagement is announced between Edward, son of Mr and Mrs J. Milne, of Ringwood, Hampshire, and Willow, daughter of Mr and Mrs P. C. Feather, of Prestwood, Leicestershire.

### Birthdays today

Lord Baneroff, 61; Mrs C. Bicknell, 64; Mr Archibald Black, 76; Lord Blake, 67; Vice-Admiral Sir Stephen Carrill, 61; Professor Sir Theodore Crawford, 72; Mr Maurice Denham, 74; Mr Richard Findlater, 62; Mr Christopher Lawrence, 47; Brigadier Sir Geoffrey Macrae, 54; Miss J. M. Quennell, 60; Herr Helmut Schmidt, 63; Mrs William Temple, 93; Mr Rayner Unwin, 58.

### Memorial service

A memorial service for Mr Anthony Seal was held on Wednesday at the Holy Trinity, Brompton. The Rev Sandy Miller officiated. Mr Timothy Seal (son) read the lesson and Sir Nicholas Goodson (Chairman of the Stock Exchange) gave an address.

### Latest appointments

Latest appointments include: Group Captain V. B. Maxwell to be Aide-de-Camp to the Queen; the new Group Captain M. J. C. W. Dicken, to be Secretary General of the Common Market; Mrs D. J. M. Main, chairman of Wiltshire education committee, to be a member of the School Curriculum Development Committee.

**St Mary's church**  
St Mary's church, London, has become the official church of the Women's Royal Naval Service, the Women's Royal Naval Reserve and the Association of Wrens.

the honour of being received by The Queen when Her Majesty invested him with the insignia of a Knight of the Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle.

Mr Arthur Schmidt wishes all his friends a merry Christmas, as he will not be sending any Christmas cards.

The Lebanese Maronite Community in London announces the celebration of a Christmas Mass by Father Antoine Sleiman on December 25, 1983 at 11am at St Edward's Convent Chapel, 11 Harewood Avenue, London NW1 (nearest Tube station, Marylebone). Everyone is welcome to attend.

**Mr A. D. Simon and Miss T. M. Stopford**  
The engagement is announced between Anton, second son of Mr A. C. Simon, of Portsmouth, Hampshire, and Mrs M. M. Simon, of Newton Kyme, Yorkshire, and Tess, youngest daughter of Major and Mrs M. R. H. Stopford, of Fulham, London.

**Mr S. A. Skilman and Miss H. C. Jameson**  
The engagement is announced between Samuel Skilman, of Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire, and Helen Jameson, of Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire.

**Mr D. F. Venn and Miss M. R. F. Fikret**  
The engagement is announced between Duncan Venn, Royal Air Force, and Miss M. R. F. Fikret, of Group Captain and Mrs M. G. P. Venn, of RAF (H), Ely, and Fikret, elder daughter of the late Mr H. Fikret, of Cyprus, and Mrs E. Fikret, of Cyprus.

**Mr O. Vetter and Miss C. R. C. Wood**  
The engagement is announced between Olivier, elder son of Professor J. P. Vetter, of Montreal, and Mme M. Vetter, and Kate, daughter of Mr R. C. Wood and Mrs P. M. Wood, of Gurnsey.

**Captain P. J. Ward, RAMC, and Miss K. M. Turner**  
The engagement is announced between Philip, youngest son of Dr and Mrs F. H. Ward, of Havant, Hampshire, and Kate, younger daughter of Mr D. J. Turner, of Hampstead, and Mrs S. W. Turner, of Welwyn, Hertfordshire.

**Mr R. Zeev and Miss C. Chamberlain**  
The engagement is announced between Benjamin, son of Mr and Mrs R. Zeev, of Tel Aviv, Israel, and Clare, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Arthur Chamberlain, of Springs Cottage, 62 Wellington Road, Edgmont, Birmingham.

### Marriages

**Mr G. E. Goodhead and Mrs S. E. T. Holmes**  
The marriage of Mr Gordon Goodhead and Mrs Susan Holmes took place on Wednesday, December 14, 1983.

**Mr C. B. Graves and Mrs M. M. Hunter Beattie**  
The marriage has taken place quietly in a Jewish ceremony between Charles Edward Graves, of Tooting, Essex, and Mrs Melissa Mary Hunter Beattie (nee Stanley), of East Bergholt, Suffolk.

### Church news

The Rev A. B. Morton to be Vicar of St. Mary's, diocese of Bath and Wells. The Rev C. W. Smith, Vicar of St. George's, diocese of Bath and Wells. The Rev D. J. Smith, Vicar of St. George's, diocese of Bath and Wells.

**Reirements and resignations**  
The Rev P. J. Clare, vicar of St. Mary's, diocese of Bath and Wells, to retire. The Rev D. J. Smith, vicar of St. George's, diocese of Bath and Wells, to retire.

**Other appointments**  
The Rev D. J. Smith, vicar of St. George's, diocese of Bath and Wells, to be vicar of St. George's, diocese of Bath and Wells.

**Scottish Episcopal Church**  
The Rev D. J. Smith, vicar of St. George's, diocese of Bath and Wells, to be vicar of St. George's, diocese of Bath and Wells.

# Oxford dons claim lunar eclipse clue fixes date of crucifixion

Two Oxford dons claim to have solved the debate over the date of Christ's crucifixion.

Colin Humphreys and Graeme Waddington, of the Department of Metallurgy and Science of Materials, calculate the date to be April 3, AD33.

They base their research on a hitherto unnoticed clue about a "blood-red moon" - a lunar eclipse.

Their article, published in the weekly journal *Nature*, explains that the only certainty about the date of the crucifixion is that it occurred during the 10 years Pontius Pilate was procurator of Judaea - AD26-36.

There are advocates for virtually every year during this period, while the actual day of execution is also uncertain since there appears to be a difference of one day between the date given by the gospel of John and

that of the Synoptics - Matthew, Mark and Luke.

But all four gospels agree that Christ died a few hours before the beginning of the Jewish Sabbath, nightfall on Friday, and - within a day - that it was the time of the Passover, the annual Jewish feast held at the time of a full moon.

The two scholars reconstructed the Jewish calendar of the first century AD, improving on earlier versions.

Their computerised new astro-physical data which cut the number of possible dates to five.

Those were reduced to two by the use of evidence from the Bible - April 7, AD30, and April 3, AD33.

Humphreys and Waddington then turned to reports that the Moon appeared like blood on the evening of Christ's crucifixion.

They cite medieval and biblical annals to explain that such a phrase was commonly used to describe a lunar eclipse.

They point out that during a lunar eclipse the moon turns red because although it is in the Earth's shadow, sunlight still reaches it by refraction in the Earth's atmosphere and having traversed a long path through the atmosphere the blue end of the spectrum is removed.

"It is, therefore, surprising that the link between the crucifixion and a lunar eclipse does not appear to have been made before."

They say they used the "most comprehensive data available" in the light of Babylonian records and long-term changes in the Earth's rate of rotation.

They discovered there was only one lunar eclipse at Passover time visible from Jerusalem - on Friday, April 3, AD33.

There were 11 other lunar eclipses during the 10-year period but not one took place both on a Friday and at the Passover, they say.

The experts explain it was well-known that some lunar eclipses turned the shadowed area of the Moon blood red and the clear part to a yellow-orange colour.

"The lunar eclipse on the same night as the crucifixion would have been interpreted by many as a supernatural sign," Humphreys and Waddington say.

"It may well have been an important factor influencing the overnight change of mind of the Jews and Pilate towards the belief in the divinity of Jesus, the placing of a military guard on the tomb."

## OBITUARY

### LORD PILKINGTON Businessman and public figure

Lord Pilkington, who died yesterday at the age of 78, was one of the outstanding businessmen of his generation. Under his leadership, the fourth generation of his family took Pilkington Brothers Ltd into glass manufacturing on every continent, and at the same time, with their float process, transformed the craft into a scientific operation which came to be used round the world.

Pilkington emerged as a national figure in 1953 when, still under 50, he became president of the Federation of British Industries. He became even better known as chairman of the Royal Commission on Doctors' and Dentists' Pay (1957-60) and of the Committee on Broadcasting named after him (1960-62).

The product of a devout and long-standing Congregationalist family, he combined a belief in the virtue of hard work with a strong sense of responsibility. It was these qualities which led him to use his great energies, not only in promoting the family company, but in taking on public positions.

William Henry Pilkington, known as Harry, was born at St Helens, Lancashire, on April 19, 1905, the eldest son of Richard Austin Pilkington and his wife Hope. Educated at Rugby and Magdalene College, Cambridge, he joined the glass business in 1927, where he underwent an initial period of probation before becoming a full Board member in 1934. He was chairman of the company from 1949 to 1973.

He combined the chairmanship with the position of finance director on the executive committee. With his cousin, Douglas Phelps, who chaired this executive, Arthur Pilkington, in charge of sales, and others he led Pilkington's through a quarter of a century of growth and prosperity, and transformed it in 1970 into a public company.

This success was attributable in part to a rapid spread of motor vehicles round the world and to the high level of building activity; it was also due in part to his own remarkable dedication and energy, spread over his many and various activities.

In 1952 Pilkington carried out an investigation into the methods and costs of school building. Two years later he served on the Crichton Down enquiry. In 1957 work began in the Royal Commission on Doctors' and Dentists' Pay, which brought out a report in 1960 recommending all-round pay increases.

### RAYMOND MANDER

Raymond Mander, who died in London on December 19, aged 72, was an actor who became, with his actor friend, Joe Mitchenson, one of the most dedicated theatre historians.

When they met, well over 40 years ago, they recognised their interest in anything theatrical, past and present. Their assemblage of memorabilia, programmes, pictures, china, books, all that bore on the subject, grew so swiftly that soon their large house in Vener Road, Sydenham, was crowded with the fruits of assiduous work.

Raymond Mander had an astonishing memory for dates and details; all who knew him or spoke to him on the telephone were used to his friendly, forthright voice that would give unhesitatingly a precise answer.

With Joe Mitchenson he wrote 20 books on such matters as the present and lost theatres of London, revue, music hall, Gilbert and Sullivan opera, and much else. *The Artist and the Theatre* (1955), one of their best, was on Somerset Maugham's collection of theatre portraits, now in the foyers of the National.

Mander and Mitchenson provided research and pictures for at least 800 books and they organized many exhibitions. The Mander and Mitchenson Collection, for the last six years a charitable trust, will be moved presently to a new permanent home at Beckenham Place, Bromley.

As an actor, Raymond Mander began in Shakespeare with the Harold Nelson company on tour 50 years ago; he played in the spectacular *Henry V* directed by Lewis Casson for Ivor Novello at Drury Lane in 1938, and with Owen Nares in *The Petrified Forest* (1942).

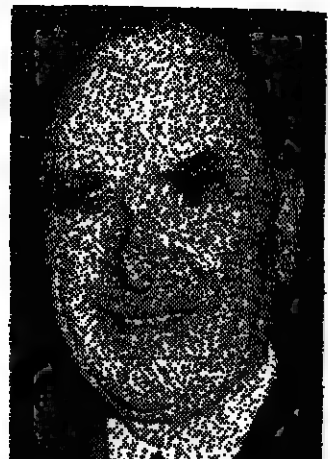
He was familiar as the Dragon King in *Where the Rainbow Ends* and for a time he and Joe Mitchenson managed the Grand Theatre, Croydon.

His book was scripted by Arthur Miller and made into a television film, *Playing for Time*, in 1980, this became notorious - and in Israel was banned - for the choice of the PLO supporting Vanessa Redgrave in the role of Fania.

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Winser had kept wicket for Staffordshire for two years before emigrating to Australia in 1909 and playing Sheffield Shield cricket.

At the time of the bodyline tour he was secretary to the Governor of South Australia, the latter happening to be on leave in England at the time of



Soon after that Pilkington was selected to head the Committee on Broadcasting. This committee's report, published in 1962, had a considerable impact with its praise for the BBC and its sharp criticism of independent television. It recommended that the BBC should be authorized to provide the third television programme in Britain, and called for sweeping reorganization of independent television.

From 1955 to 1972 Pilkington served as a governor of the Bank of England. He was knighted in 1953 and created a life peer in 1968.

He was by nature rather shy, the product perhaps of a strict upbringing. Many people remarked upon the great change which came about after his second marriage, in 1961, to Mrs Mavis Wilding, which seemed to give him the support he needed.

But for many years he was as active physically as he was mentally. At a time of life when other would have given up the game, he would have his colleagues playing tennis before breakfast, even when in central London. And for short distances the bicycle was his preferred mode of transport; after a City function he would often surprise the other guests by putting on his clips and cycling off into the night.

To the end he remained loyal to St Helens and the employees of Pilkington's. He was an active member of the local community, serving on the local bench and as chairman of the North-West Regional Council for Sport and Recreation. In his later years he would write personal letters to pensioners when they reached their 80th birthday, and later milestones.

He had married in 1930 Rosamond Margaret Rowan, who died in 1953. He is survived by his second wife, and a son and a daughter.

### FANIA FÉNELON

Fania Fénelon, who has died in Paris at the age of 75, was a former inmate of Auschwitz who owed her survival to the fact that she functioned as a diverter her captors and tormentors. Many years later she chose to exorcize the horrifying ghosts of those years in the book *The Musicians of Auschwitz* which was published in 1977.

She had been born half French, half Jewish and before the war had studied piano at the Paris Conservatoire. In 1943 she was arrested on charges of being involved in the Resistance and in 1944 was deported to Auschwitz.

The *Musicians of Auschwitz* tells the bizarre story of how she, along with others of musical bent, was chosen to participate in a camp orchestra.

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Facelift for a queen: Mr Colin Hill, a stonemason, preparing to restore the head of Queen Eleanor, the wife of Edward I, which forms part of the Eleanor Cross at Haddington, near Northampton. Only two other original crosses marking the resting places of the queen's funeral cortege travelling from Harby, Nottinghamshire, to London in 1290 survive. They are at Geddington, Northamptonshire, and Welham Cross, Hertfordshire.

(Photograph: Bill Warhurst)

## University news

**Oxford**  
The following awards at Oxford colleges have been announced: **BRADSHAW COLLEGE** - Open scholarship, Chemistry, J. Hinton, Merchant Taylors' School, London. **CRISTOL COLLEGE** - Open scholarship, Chemistry, J. Hinton, Merchant Taylors' School, London. **CRISTOL COLLEGE** - Open scholarship, Chemistry, J. Hinton, Merchant Taylors' School, London.

**Sheffield**  
Grants **UK Atomic Energy Authority** £75,000 to Professor J. Hinton, over two years for an investigation of the interaction of neutrons and control of nuclear reactors. **UK Atomic Energy Authority** £75,000 to Professor J. Hinton, over two years for an investigation of the interaction of neutrons and control of nuclear reactors.

**Professor Richard M. Barrer, FRS: Aberdeen honour.**  
Aberdeen degrees are to be conferred in July on the following: **LL.D.** - Charles Cockburn, former Aberdeen Hospital; **M.D.** - Robert D. Barrer, former Aberdeen Hospital; **Ph.D.** - Robert D. Barrer, former Aberdeen Hospital.

**Corpus Christi College**  
The Rev C. W. Smith, vicar of St. George's, diocese of Bath and Wells, to be vicar of St. George's, diocese of Bath and Wells.

**St Mary's church**  
St Mary's church, London, has become the official church of the Women's Royal Naval Service, the Women's Royal Naval Reserve and the Association of Wrens.

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## Cloning and lasers herald the end of tooth decay

New York (N.Y. Times News Service) - Public health officials in the United States are predicting the virtual end of tooth decay among children and young adults by the end of the century because of new developments in dental technology and the fluoridation of water supplies.

This year alone advances in dental research have ranged from the identification of the gene that produces tooth enamel, and thus the potential for cloning it by genetic engineering, to the use of lasers in an experimental method of recrystallizing the mineral structure of decaying teeth.

Coupled with the wider use of fluorides and sealants, the officials say, the new technology should almost halt tooth decay for people under the age of 50 within the foreseeable future.

Dr Harold Loe, director of the National Institute of Dental Research in Bethesda, Maryland, says the revolution in dental research, technology and treatment over the past decade has yielded remarkable results.

By the end of the century the loss of teeth would be rare, he believes.

Fluoridation, which was started as a research project in Michigan in 1945, came to New York State shortly afterwards and accelerated in the 1960s, has led to an enormous decrease in tooth decay in young people.

Fluoridation itself was accompanied by research into other types of dental protection, such as plastic coatings for teeth.

According to one federal survey, more than one third of Americans under 17 have no tooth decay at all today, while

in the past decade tooth decay in those under 17 has been halved.

Dr Albert Russell, a dental researcher at the University of Michigan, has studied the effects of fluoridation in Grand Rapids, Michigan, the first American city deliberately to fluoridate its water. He estimates that tooth decay among young people there has been reduced by 80 per cent.

According to Dr Loe, the treatment of gum disease among the middle-aged and elderly remained a serious problem that had not been adequately researched.

However, the National Dental Institute was beginning to research the ailments of older Americans.

Among the solutions would be widespread use of a mouth rinse that would help to kill the bacteria that start gum disease.

Such a procedure, widely used in Europe, is among the many that have been discussed recently at meetings of dental researchers.

This month, Dr Harold C. Slavkin, a professor of biochemistry at the University of Southern California's school of dentistry, and Mr Malcolm L. Sneed, of Baylor University, reported that they had taken the initial step toward identifying genetic material that would cause yeast cells to manufacture the protein molecules for dental enamel.

The two dental researchers predicted that when the process is perfected, perhaps in five years, yeast cells would be implanted in cavities, where they would grow cloned enamel crystals that would be more attractive and last longer than the metal and porcelain now used in fillings.

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## Services tomorrow: Christmas Eve

**WESTMINSTER ABBEY** - Christmas Eve service, 7.30pm. Tomorrow shall be my singing day. **ST. MARTIN'S** - Christmas Eve service, 7.30pm. Tomorrow shall be my singing day.

**ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL** - Christmas Eve service, 7.30pm. Tomorrow shall be my singing day. **ST. MARTIN'S** - Christmas Eve service, 7.30pm. Tomorrow shall be my singing day.

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Fraser to atte

Old La

NEWS IN BRIEF

Wm call by Airship Industries

THE ISLAND PHARMACY

GOLD



# FINANCE AND INDUSTRY

Executive Editor Kenneth Fleet

## Fraser expects Lonrho to attempt the obvious

In the wake of the tragic bombing of Harrods, the price of Fraser shares has risen 20p to within twopence of the high for the year. Business in the stock market, as in the most famous of Fraser's department stores, has continued more or less as usual and the movement in the shares has caused a fresh rash of speculation about Fraser's fate. This turns, as everyone by now knows, on the outcome of the relentless siege of the Fraser board by Mr Roland "Tiny" Rowland who, through Lonrho, directly commands just under 30 per cent of Fraser's equity. Mr Rowland's stated objective is to demerge Harrods from House of Fraser. So far Professor Roland Smith, the chairman, and the majority of Fraser directors (Lonrho has two Fraser directors, Mr Rowland and Lord Duncan-Sandys) have thwarted him.

Suggestions in the market yesterday that the beleaguered majority had agreed to giving up Harrods, and Professor Smith was giving up the struggle, were dismissed by the company as "total and absolute garbage". But my instinct tells me that Mr Rowland has been too quiet for too long. I understand that his offer to sponsor the Derby for £600,000 has been turned down by the Jockey Club because of a certain condition he laid down and his decision to put seasonal greetings from Lonrho in the windows of the former Bunny Club in Park Lane, now owned by Lonrho, has also caused a certain furor. But the big prize remains Harrods and if Mr Rowland does not move soon, he may not be able to move at all.

Time is ticking away in the Department of Trade and Industry's inquiry into the Fraser share register. This was ordered in August when Mr John Griffiths, a former attorney-general for Hongkong, was appointed to discover whether heavy buying of Fraser shares, mainly from abroad, was "in concert" and, therefore in contravention of the 1981 Companies Act. Lord said at the time that "we have nothing to fear from this investigation."

Mr Griffiths ought to complete his work within two months at the outside. Should he, or the Government on the basis of his findings, decide, say, to disenfranchise

certain holders of Fraser shares who might just conceivably support Mr Rowland, the muster of Lonrho votes for demerging Harrods, should such a resolution again be put to an extraordinary shareholders' meeting, would be heavily impaired. Mr Rowland therefore may still be looking for an opportunity to display his strength before Mr Griffiths reports to the Minister. His obvious tactic still is to find a pretext for removing Professor Smith, and with him Mr Ernest Sharp and probably Mr George Willoughby from the Fraser board. He needs only a simple majority to perpetrate the deed, but a man of his cunning, surely should find the obvious beneath him.

## Hawley goes fishing in the Midlands

The energetic Mr Michael Ashcroft, chairman of Hawley Group, has again displayed imaginative, and profitable, acumen in two new deals. Yesterday morning he announced the acquisition of a 29.9 per cent stake in the Midlands-based brokers Fyfe, Horton, Finney & Co. (FHF). FHF satisfy Mr Ashcroft's various criteria. It is outside London; administrative costs are low; it is closely connected with the small business clients among whom Mr Ashcroft sees a promising future. (FHF was also once Hawley's brokers; the firm is modern in outlook; it has a fully computerized operation; and it came relatively cheap.

Mr Ashcroft paid less than six figures for an entry into a new form of financial service business expected to grow from the restructuring taking place in the Stock Exchange. Others have paid millions. He describes his purpose as "gaining a position on the starting block, if, and when, we decide that the race is worth entering."

That decision seems to have been made. Hawley Group's Procroft subsidiary is a licensed dealer. It recently underwrote the Pineapple Dance Centre's rights issue, with an option to acquire 10 per cent. If the Pine apple share price doubles in the next two years Hawley will show a neat £400,000 net profit.

## Old Lady's loss is GEC's gain

Gordon Richardson, now Lord Richardson of Duntisbourne, would have liked another spell as Governor of the Bank of England: not perhaps another full five-year term, but perhaps two or so years before making way for his successor.

Mrs Thatcher, however, preferred to make a new appointment, before the General Election, and Mr Robin Leigh-Pemberton moved from the chair at National Westminster to embrace the Old Lady (of Threadneedle Street, that is) on July 1.

Lord Richardson is too sage and valuable a man to spend aimless days in a quiet office at the Bank of England, thoughtfully arranged on his behalf by Sir Jasper Hollom, a former deputy governor and still a member of the Court. Not surprisingly, his first post-governmental step is into that modern Greek gymnasium, the boardroom of General Electric, now presided over by Lord Carrington, with the irrepressible Lord Weinstock as permanently resident director of studies.

Lord Richardson's age may preclude his succeeding Lord Carrington, aged 64, when the former Foreign Secretary leaves to become secretary-general of Nato next June. Lord Richardson is 68 and GEC directors are expected to retire at 70. That said, he would be an admirable choice. At the Bank of England he had a justified reputation for hard work and for expecting colleagues to work just as hard as he did. He has a wide knowledge of the economy, both domestic and international and the analytical and precise mind of the best lawyers his expertise in financial affairs might come in handy should Lord Weinstock and Sir Kenneth Bond want to move GEC's almost legendary cash mountains.

GEC's board has several unusual flavours and a catholic spread of interests. Sir William Rees-Mogg, a former editor of *The Times*, is a non-executive director and GEC is one of the few companies in this country to have a woman on the board, the Hon Mrs Sara Morrison. No statutory female she.

## GrandMet's 34% profits rise disappoints market

By Jeremy Warner

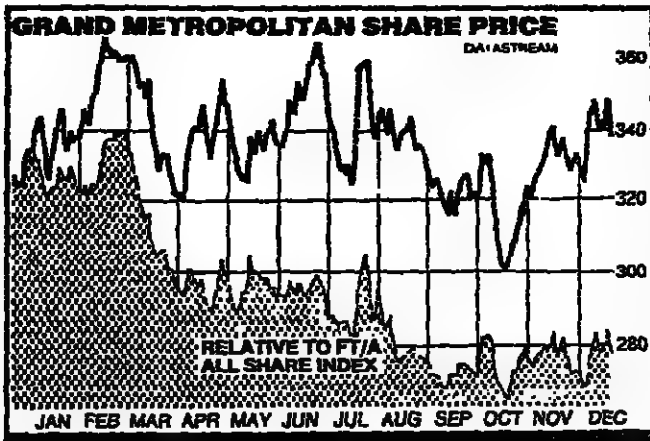
A strong improvement in the United States and lower interest charges helped Grand Metropolitan, the brewing, hotels and leisure group, to increase pretax profits by 34 per cent in the year to the end of September.

When the group reported a 52 per cent leap in half-year profits in May it gave a warning that it was unrealistic to expect growth at this rate to be maintained.

This, however, did not prevent analysts from floating some airy forecasts in recent weeks. As a result, the company's shares fell 5p to 338p yesterday.

The board is making a one-for-five scrip issue to bring share capital more in line with inflated group reserves. It is also increasing the final dividend by 18 per cent to 5.75p, thus bringing the total for the year to 9.625p, against 8.375p.

Group pretax profits rose from £220.2m to £295.2m after a £22.8m fall in the interest charge to £111.8m. Lower interest rates in both Britain and the United States and a \$125m rights issue 18 months ago were the main factors



behind the lower bank borrowing costs.

The group's strong dollar earnings, which in consumer products were as much as 31 per cent higher, were given a further boost by the currency fluctuations of the last year.

The pound's fall against the dollar is estimated to have added about £20m to aggregate profits.

Trading profits from con-

sumer products in the United States rose from £64.7m to £98.4m, thanks largely to a remarkable gain in volume by the group's cigarette company, Liggett & Myers which has benefited from the shift away from branded to generic tobacco products in the United States.

Per foods and keep-fit equipment, the other peripheral businesses that Grand Met acquired in 1980 when it bought the drinks distribution company, Liggett, also had a buoyant year in the United States.

Walney Mann, the brewing subsidiary had a good second half with volume sales rising sharply during the hot summer and profits rose from £68.5m to £73m for the year as a whole.

In British consumer services, buoyant casino profits of more than £30m led to a rise in the division's trading profits of £6.5m to £73.6m. Results would have been even better but for the heavy costs taken against revenue of reorganizing and rationalizing betting shops, restaurants and other leisure interests.

Mr Stanley Grinstead, chairman said that hotels made better profits in a year when the integration of the group's original portfolio of hotels into Intercontinental was completed.

The wines and spirits division also consolidated its position. Trading profits in wines and spirits rose from £98.1m to £104.5m and hotel profits were up from £22.9m to £27.3m.

## UK trade back in surplus

By Peter Wilson-Smith

Ranking Correspondent

Britain's trade with the rest of the world bounced back into the black last month as imports fell from October's record level.

The current account of the balance of payments was in surplus by £317m last month, including an estimated surplus of £210m on trade in invisibles. This compared with a £219m deficit in October and surpluses in the two previous months.

The current account has moved erratically throughout this year and although the figures were welcomed in Whitehall, officials remained cautious about reading too much into one month's figures.

Monthly figures can also be unreliable because they are often subject to big revisions. Last month the Treasury was forecasting a £500m current account surplus for the whole of this year, but earnings on invisibles have been revised upwards and the current account surplus in the first 11 months of the year is now put at £1.31 billion.

Imports were expected to fall last month after the surge in October, but although the total was down from £5,394m to £5,174m, the trend is still upwards. However, the fall in imports, combined with a rise in exports to £5,281m - the second highest figures on record - helped to push the visible trade balance from a £429m deficit to a £107m surplus.

A bigger surplus on oil trade contributed to the improvement, but the main reason was the much stronger balance of non-oil trade.

Imports are still at a higher level than during the summer, which is attributed to restocking by industry and higher spending by consumer.

Underlying imports volume is also continuing to rise with volume up by 4 per cent in the latest three months compared with the three months to the end of August.

Exports including oil, however, showed an increase of 5 per cent by volume over the same period.

## BALANCE OF PAYMENTS

	Current	Visible	Invisibles
1981	+6547	+3008	+3539
1982	+5378	+2119	+3259
1983 Q4	+5257	+1215	+4042
1983 Q1	+781	-163	+944
Q2	-171	-869	+698
Q3	+603	295	+898
June	+315	+141	+174
July	-19	-118	+137
Aug	+178	-122	+300
Sept	+444	+145	+299
Oct	-219	-429	+210
Nov	+317	+107	+210

Source: Department of Trade and Industry

## Allianz equals BAT bid for Eagle Star

By Andrew Connolly

West German insurer Allianz Versicherung yesterday matched BAT Industries' record £934m takeover bid for Eagle Star Holdings, Britain's sixth largest insurer. The 675p per share bid from Allianz is the seventh offer since the bidding for Eagle Star began 10 weeks ago.

Allianz made its latest bid after the City Takeover Panel set a deadline of 4.30pm on December 30 for the final bidding in the fiercely contested takeover battle.

Eagle Star shares yesterday fell on the stock market from 729p to 712p as dealers contemplated the prospect that BAT was preparing to pull out of the bidding. BAT shares rose by 4p to 172p on the news.

Sir Denis Mountain, chairman of Eagle Star, said that although Allianz had matched BAT's offer, the Eagle board continues to believe strongly that BAT is a more appropriate parent for the group.

However, he said that the Eagle board does not propose to recommend any revision of the competing offers which are

announced before the December 30 deadline. He said the board believes that it is a bid be appropriate to reserve any further advice to shareholders until the terms of such final offer are known.

BAT Industries declined to comment on the Allianz bid. The board indicated that it is overseeing the latest development.

However BAT joined Eagle Star in discounting the stock-market rumours that an American insurance company was about to launch a blockbuster bid for Eagle Star. Mr Philip Evans, of Morgan Grenfell, the merchant bank advisers to Allianz, refused to rule out this possibility.

He indicated that at least five per cent of Eagle Star's shares had been traded over the past week and that only a serious bidder would risk the £60m-plus necessary to complete deals of this size.

Despite the uncertainty over the ultimate intentions of Allianz, the West German group is favourite to win control of Eagle Star.

## Wedd to close New York office

By Michael Clark

Wedd Durlacher & Mordeant, the biggest of London's five stockjobbing firms, has decided to close its New York office and cease trading - just a few weeks after becoming the object of a \$15m (£10.6m) lawsuit from two of Wall Street's largest brokers.

Last night Mr John Robertson, senior partner at Wedd, admitted that the decision had been made purely on a trading basis. "It is a commercial decision. The venture had not really worked out as anticipated," he said.

Wedd last month received several writs from brokers Merrill Lynch and Lehman Bros. Kuhn Loeb, alleging fraudulent dealing with regard to the collapse of the investment company C & R Pastor Securities. Wedd is contesting the claim.

Wedd said that although the New York office had ceased trading and both the New York Stock Exchange and Merrill Lynch had been informed, the company Wedd Durlacher Inc had not been wound up.

## OECD lifts shares

The FT Index reached a fresh peak for the fourth day in succession yesterday, as share prices continued to forge ahead, helped by encouraging indicators and the bright view of the British economy painted in this week's report from the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development.

The 30-share index closed 4.2 points higher at 776.2

## STOCK EXCHANGES

FT Index 776.2 up 4.2  
FT 100: 83.14 up 0.21  
FT All Share: 469.84 up 1.89  
Bargains: 18,943  
New York Dow Jones Industrial average (latest) 1253.86 down 1.12  
Tokyo Nikkei Dow Jones Index 9,709.23 down 8.42  
Hongkong Hang Seng Index 863.56 up 6.0  
Amsterdam 157.6 down 1.3  
Sydney AO Index 762.1  
Frankfurt Commerzbank Index 1034.0 up 9.1  
Brussels General Index 135.97 up 0.74  
Paris CAC Index 152.9 up 0.2  
Zurich SKA General 312.80 up 2.70

## CURRENCIES

LONDON CLOSE  
Sterling \$1.4275 up 50pts  
Index 82.3 unchanged  
DM 3.9525 up 0.0075  
FFr 12.0650 up 0.0350  
Yen 334 down 0.25  
Dollar Index 130.5 up 0.4  
DM 2.7675 down 0.0040  
NEW YORK LATES  
Sterling \$1.4275  
Dollar DM 2.7675  
INTERNATIONAL  
ECU 80.571743  
SDR 80.731613

## INTEREST RATES

Domestic rates:  
Bank base rates 9  
Discount market loans we fixed 8 1/2  
3 month interbank 9 1/2-9 3/4  
Euro-currency rates:  
3 month dollar 10 1/2-10 3/4  
3 month DM 5 1/2-5 3/4  
3 month Ffr 13 1/2-13 3/4  
US rates:  
Bank prime rate 11.00  
Fed funds 9 1/4  
Treasury long bond 101-101 1/2  
ECGD Fixed Rate Sterling Export Finance Scheme IV Average reference rate for interest period November 2 to December 8, 1983 inclusive 9.350 per cent.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### £7m call by Airship Industries

Airship Industries yesterday announced details of a £7m rights issue - its second cash call on shareholders in less than 10 months.

The issue is being underwritten by Bond Corporation, the company run and controlled by the flamboyant Australian entrepreneur Mr Alan Bond who recently added the American Cup to his list of successes.

Mr Andrew Millar, the chairman of Airship, which hopes to make the first commercially produced airships in Britain since the 1930s, said that without refinancing the company's achievements over the last eight years would be vulnerable. Since 1978, the company has spent more than £11m developing its product.

The Island Revenue has published draft legislation on the tax treatment of deep discount securities, whereby the discount will be treated as income accruing over the life of the stock on a compound yield basis, the treasury said.

Directors of International Paint have agreed terms that will allow the company's parent group, Courtaulds, to buy out the publicly held 12.2 per cent minority shareholding it does not already own.

## GOLD

London fixed (per ounce):  
am \$378.90 pm \$318.90  
close \$377.50-378.25 (\$264.75-265.25)  
New York (close): \$378.75  
Kruggerand (per coin):  
\$389-390.50 (\$272.75-273.25)  
Sovereigns (new):  
\$88-89 (\$61.75-62.50)  
\*Excludes VAT

## Shares lose early gains

New York (AP-Dow Jones) - Stocks slowed in early trading yesterday, giving up the strong gains recorded at the start.

The Dow Jones industrial average was up about 2 1/2 points after having been up by more than four, while the transportation index was down nearly three points.

Advancers held a slim 7-to-6 lead over declines and trading was active.

Mr Philip B. Erlanger, chief technical analyst for Advest Inc, said: "I am becoming more and more bullish despite some of the sentiment indicators."

There is a buying opportunity here while the market pauses to digest its gains. It should close higher.

General Electric was up 1/4 at 38 1/2; General Motors up 1/4 at 38 1/2.

## WALL STREET

74 1/2; Eastman Kodak up 1/4 to 74 1/2; International Business Machines up 1/4 at 123 1/2; Telebyte down 1/4 at 163 1/2; Monsanto up 1/4 at 108 1/2. Burroughs was trading at 49 1/2; CSX 26 1/2, down 1/4; UAL 38, unchanged; Motorola 132 1/2, up 1/4; Times-Mirror 75 1/2, down 1/4; Gulf Oil 42 1/2, up 1/4; Sanders Associates 49 1/2, up 1/4; Watkins-Johnson unchanged; and Merck 9 1/4, up 1/4.

Nigeria is seeking refinancing credits of six years, with 2 1/2 years grace, to enable existing arrears on short-term trade debt totalling between \$3 billion and \$5 billion to be brought up to date, the British Export Credits Guarantee Department said.

## Pound rises on hopes of more stable market

## BNOC to hold N Sea oil price

By David Young, Energy Correspondent

The decision by BNOC to keep its present pricing policy was made against considerable pressure from American companies operating in the North Sea which have seen prices on their domestic market follow the trend in the world spot market, based in Rotterdam.

Traders can now buy oil at more than \$1 a barrel below the North Sea official price and often a \$1 a barrel below the official Opec price of \$29.

BNOC's decision will aid Opec in its attempt to stabilize the world oil market. It will also stimulate oil demand by giving consumers a long-term price structure and help to control oil output to a level which can be absorbed by industrial consumers.

The Opec agreement on prices and production quotas reached in Geneva three weeks ago was then described as "fragile". The BNOC decision makes it more likely that Opec

can keep to that agreement until its next meeting on July 20, in Geneva or Vienna.

Although British production is small by comparison with Opec output, North Sea oil competes directly on the world markets with the oil produced by the smaller countries among Opec's 13 state membership. For that reason the North Sea now influences Opec decisions.

Indonesia, an Opec member, said officially yesterday that it welcomed Britain's decision to freeze prices.

The three main operators in the North Sea, BP, Shell and Esso, have been supporting price stability while Texaco and Chevron have been following internal trends in the United States and asking for a price cut.

Several independent US refining companies have been indicating to their suppliers that they want a price cut of up to \$1.50 a barrel.

This advertisement has been placed by Samuel Moringu & Co. Limited on behalf of Reed Stenhouse Companies Limited ("Reed Stenhouse").

## To the Stenhouse Holdings shareholders

## THE REED STENHOUSE OFFER WILL NOT BE INCREASED

Reed Stenhouse has received acceptances in respect of 36.5 per cent. of the issued share capital of Stenhouse Holdings.

Reed Stenhouse will not increase its Offer which has been extended and will remain open for acceptance until 3.00pm on Wednesday 11th January, 1984.

The Stenhouse Holdings board has failed to answer the questions raised by Reed Stenhouse. Your attention is particularly drawn to the following facts:

- \* The Reed Stenhouse Offer is worth 142.4p per Stenhouse Holdings share\* being an increase in capital value of 34.3 per cent. over the market price of 106p per Stenhouse Holdings share prior to the announcement of the Offer.
- \* Mr Herbert Houghton, the immediate past Chairman, has resigned from the board of Stenhouse Holdings and has independently advised shareholders to accept the Offer.
- \* The largest independent shareholder owning 20 per cent. of Stenhouse Holdings has accepted the Offer.
- \* The Offer will unlock the discount between the Stenhouse Holdings share price and net asset value.
- \* No alternative bidders have emerged despite an intensive international search by Stenhouse Holdings.

The Offer will not be increased - accept the Reed Stenhouse Offer now and obtain the benefits of a DIRECT interest in your company's principal asset.

Continuing as a Stenhouse Holdings shareholder is a most unattractive alternative.

\*This figure is based on the Reed Stenhouse Class A share price of C\$12.25 as reported by The Toronto Stock Exchange and an exchange rate of C\$1-C\$1.77, being the share price and exchange rate at the close of business on 20th December, 1983. The Stenhouse Holdings share price is the middle market quotation derived from the Daily Official List of The Stock Exchange.

The directors of Reed Stenhouse (including Mr Arthur W. John and Mr Raymond G. Smeeth who are directors of Stenhouse Holdings, Mr Herbert Houghton who was until his recent resignation a director of Stenhouse Holdings but including those who have delegated supervision of this advertisement) have taken all reasonable care to ensure that the facts stated and the opinions expressed herein are fair and accurate and each of the directors accepts responsibility accordingly.







INVESTORS' NOTEBOOK

# First-half profits jump to £943,000 at Smith Bros

The future of Smith Brothers, one of the two quoted stock jobs on the stock exchange, looks secure. Certainly yesterday's interim pretax profit figures of £943,000 were well up on the £585,000 of the previous year.

But it is not current trading or the company's healthy yield that make the shares so attractive now. It is the deal struck with N M Rothschild this month which gave the bankers a 29.9 per cent stake.

As both are considered experts in their own operations of gold bullion and gold shares - both internationally desirable commodities - it is the establishment of a jointly owned international dealing subsidiary that offers Smith Brothers so much potential beyond what they are achieving now.

The new company will extend Smith's dealing base in New York and Los Angeles while fully exploiting Rothschild's operations in the Far East. Both are expected to stick closely to the wholesale side of the business. To make the most of that Smith needed capital, and lots of it.

Its own capital base of £6m looked minuscule in relation to the giants in the industry who trade in billions - as does Smith but on a much lower margin - and the weight of the Rothschild name gives weight where previously it would not have been given.

Smith already has two-thirds of its 55 dealing staff concentrating on international securities and the Rothschild deal should provide them with all the incentive necessary to really show what they can do.

The company has been earning up financially for such moves. Rothschild are paying £5.5m for the stake and injecting another £5m for the new company that Smith is expected to match.

The next obvious expansion area for chairman Mr Anthony Lewis's team looks likely to be Australia. That country's shares are also a Smith speciality.

Not surprisingly, the company underlines its expansion by saying that first-half trading was mixed and the second-half is satisfactory, but it is too early to make a forecast. The interim dividend is the same as last year, a penny. Not very generous, but the shares, at 77p, yield a good 5.6 per cent and offer a great deal of promise.



Anthony Lewis: looks set for expansion in Australia

## Reardon Smith Line

The Reardon Smith Line, which runs a small fleet of four bulk carriers, has been hit severely by the recession in the world shipping industry.

Reardon is suffering from the inevitable cutting of rates and margins which has resulted from the overcapacity in the industry, although the number of British ships lying idle last month fell for the fourth successive month.

In the six months to September 30, Reardon made pretax profits of £468,000 after losses of £2.76m in the same period last year.

However, the return to profits was the result of selling two vessels for £1.8m and the renegotiation of an agreement on chartered in losses which contributed £2.6m.

Reardon is likely to face a loss in the final stage as these one-off contributions are unlikely to be repeated.

The immediate trading position looks bleak and there is no immediate sign of any recovery in the trading position according to the board. However, the board said there were signs of recovery in the trading position according to the board. However, the board said there were signs of recovery in the trading position according to the board.

over, the board said there were signs of recovery in the world economy which, it is hoped, would result in an improvement in the movement of dry cargo and a resulting increase in freight rates.

Turnover at Reardon fell from £7.3m to £1.8m, while the trading losses came entirely from the bulk carrier dry cargo fleet after the sale of the two tankers.

Company borrowings fell from £8m to £5m after the sale of the vessels.

The results from Reardon back the claims made by British shippers for extra support from the Government for the industry.

The shipping industry argues that with 81 ships lying idle in the home fleet the Government should consider giving some support to shipowners. In the meantime the General Council for British shipping has given a warning that the industry must control its costs vigorously if the remaining ships are to stay in service.

The continuing problems faced by the industry have led to an assessment by leading analysts that the most attractive sector of the shipping sector is the non-shipping element of company balance sheets.

### APPOINTMENTS

## Chairman elect joins Guinness main board

Guinness Peat Group: Mr Albert Frost, who takes over as chairman of Guinness Peat & Co. on January 1, has been appointed to the board of the parent company, Guinness Peat Group.

Elder Dempster Lines: Mr D Sykes will retire as managing director on July 31. He will be succeeded by Mr K H Birch, who is trade director. Elder Dempster is part of Ocean Transport & Trading and Mr Birch will join the group's marine division board from January 1. Mr R P Gregory will become trade director.

Thames Television: Mr Mike Phillips, managing director of Thames Television International, becomes executive director from January 1.

Legal and General Group: Mr T J Palmer, at present general manager of Legal and General International, will in addition to his appointment as deputy group chief executive of Legal and General Group, become chief general manager of Legal and General Assurance Society on January 1. Mr E Wynne Owen, chief general manager of Legal and General Assurance Society, will be appointed chief general manager of Legal and General International on the same date. Mr J K Elbourne, managing director, Legal and General Assurance Holdings (Australia), will become general manager, Legal and General International from July 1.

Stroud Riley Drummond: The following appointments have been made in the leisure fabric division, incorporating Stroud Riley International: Mr Michael Miskell has become assistant managing director. Mr Philip Stott, production director. Mr Tony Lister, development director and Mr David Maden, accounts director. In the worsted fabric division incorporating James Drummond & Sons and J Haywood & Sons, Mr Leslie Metterick becomes operations and production director. The following appointments have been made after the recent acquisition of Longbottoms (Sowerby Bridge), which has now become part of the worsted fabric division: Mr S M Simmonds becomes group chief executive. Mr R M Stroud, group managing director. Mr B S Levi, group sales director and Mr E E Taylor, group financial director.

## Why the Hongkong bankers 'have a hard time ahead'

Hongkong. (Reuters) - Problems that arose for the Hongkong banking sector this year means it faces a difficult 1984, the Commissioner for Banking and Deposit Taking Companies, Mr Colin Martin, says.

"This has been the most difficult year for bankers in the history of Hongkong and it will take several years to make a full adjustment to what will happen," he said.

He attributed the problems to the slump in the property market and uncertainty over Hongkong's political future.

The big fall in property demand and prices badly affected banks, which have lent heavily to the property sector over the last few years, Mr Martin said. "Many loans cannot be paid off until property is sold or leased."

Particularly for capital investment, was relatively low, and unlikely to pick up until there was a political settlement between the Chinese and British Governments over the future of Hongkong, he added.

However, Mr Martin said he did not foresee further problems of the type and gravity faced by some local banks earlier this year. In late September, the Hongkong Government acquired the Hang Lung Bank after its failure to meet its liabilities to its clearing bank.

Less than a week later, Merrill Lynch and Co and Cie Financiere de Paris et des Pays Bas (Paris) took a joint controlling stake in Sun Hung Kai and Co to ward off a potential run on its subsidiary, Sun Hung Kai Bank.

Mr Martin said most Hongkong domestic banks were now in a relatively sound position and their minimal exposure to the large property groups.

Foreign banks are large enough internationally to absorb any losses without being caused too much discomfort, he added. Several local subsidiaries of overseas banking groups are reported by local analysts to be among the main creditors of failed property companies.

In Tokyo, the ability of the stock market to shrug off recent bad political news and roar ahead to record highs this week points a bullish market in the coming year, market analysts said.

The Japanese economy looks set to move to a more broadly based growth pattern on a revival in domestic demand, raising expectations of higher profits, they said.

There is liquidity available to feed the market because domestic industrial investment has not started a full revival yet, the analysts noted.

## Edward Jones to raise £1.2m for expansion

By Vivien Goldsmith

Edward Jones Group, the building contractor and property developer, which acquired a medical centre in September when Dr Richard Petty, the co-founder of the International Hospitals Group, became chairman, is raising £1.225m by a rights issue.

Some of this money will go towards the purchase of two nursing homes in Southern England for £660,000 and paying £1.5 to Woodbourne Company (Jersey) for Raz Investments whose sole assets are a 15 per cent stake in IHG (International Hospitals Group) and IHG (Medical Services) respectively. The initial payment of £400,000 will be paid from the proceeds of the rights issue.

The issue is of 4,295,732 ordinary shares on the basis of two for three and 10 new ordinary shares for every £3 of loan stock at 32p per share. After the announcement the shares were down 1p at 41p.

The company is trying to mop up the 15 per cent loan stock 1995/98 by offering holders ordinary shares at an improved conversion rate - 11 ordinary for every £2 of loan stock rather than 5 ordinary for every £1 of loan stock. There is £429,573 of loan stock outstanding which, on conversion at the improved rate, would result in the creation of 2,362,652 new ordinary shares.

Edward Jones Half-year to 30.6.1983 Pretax profit £30,000 (£63,000 loss) Stated earnings 0.7p (loss 1.47p) Turnover £1.75 million (£1.38 million) Net interest/dividend Nil (Nil) Share price 41p

Mr Nicholas Morris, the managing director, said that this was "a clean and easy way of mopping up the loan stock". He added that it would also have the effect of boosting the balance sheet.

The announcement coincided with the group's half-time results. The company made a trading loss of £8,000 on a turnover of £1.75m compared with a trading loss of £63,000 on a turnover of £1.38m in the first six months last year.

The trading loss was turned into a pretax profit of £30,000 by profit of £38,000 on the sale of a supermarket in North Wales. No dividend is being paid.

The group, however, is forecasting that it might reach breakeven by the end of the year, and although that is unlikely to result in a dividend payment this year, there is the glimmer of hope that dividend will return in the next financial year.

Mr Morris said that IHG, which made profits of £1.994m in 1982, may go public in its own right.

### WALL STREET

Dec 22	Dec 21	Dec 20	Dec 19	Dec 18	Dec 17
NYSE	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
AMEX	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
NASDAQ	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
COMEX	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
CRUDE	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
WHEAT	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
CORN	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
SUGAR	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
COPPER	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
ZINC	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
LEAD	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
NICKEL	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
PLATINUM	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
PALM OIL	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
SOYBEANS	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
WHEAT	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
CORN	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
SUGAR	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
COPPER	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
ZINC	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
LEAD	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
NICKEL	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
PLATINUM	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
PALM OIL	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
SOYBEANS	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15

## Base Lending Rates

ABN Bank	9%
Barclays	9%
BCCI	9%
Cheltenham & Gloucester	10 1/4%
Consolidated Trust	9%
Continental Bank	9%
C. Hoare & Co	9%
Lloyds Bank	9%
Midland Bank	9%
Nat Westminster	9%
TSB	9%
Williams & Glyn's	9%

### COMPANY NEWS IN BRIEF

Suter has exchanged contracts with a local industrial company for the sale of six acres of land at Theale, Berkshire, for £2m. Suter's Clothiers: 26 weeks to Oct 1, 1983. Figures in £000. Turnover 1,336 (1,259). Trading loss 78 (34). Exceptional items 16 (nil). Loss before tax 44 (34). Tax nil (nil). Board believes there will be a return to profitability by the year-end. James Creen: Half-year to June 30, 1983. Figures in £000. Turnover 41,265 (41,653). Pretax profit 1,017 (470). Board expects second half to be better than first. Highgate and Job Group: Half-year to Sept 30, 1983. Figures in £000. Turnover 3,188 (3,191). Pretax loss 2 (63). Results confirm target for a return to profit this year. Pict Petroleum: Year to Oct 31, 1983. Figures in £000. Loss on ordinary operations, before and after tax, 232 (1,604). No dividend (same). Sutcliffe, Speakman: Half-year to Sept 30, 1983. Figures in £000. Turnover 2,751 (2,924). Loss 124 (loss 159) after tax and minorities. No interim dividend (same). Banker Investment Trust: Year to Oct 31, 1983, compared with 18 months to Oct 31, 1982. Total revenue £3,059m (£4,035m). Total dividend 4.16p, against an annualised 3.95p. One-for-one scrip issue proposed. Cranite Group: Year to Sept 30, 1983. Figures in £000. Turnover 10,832 (10,507). Pretax loss 1,354 (80). Turnbull Scott Holdings: Figures in £000. Turnover 8,508 (10,581). Pretax profit 140 (loss 1,176). Interim payment 3p (same). Victoria Carpet Holdings: Half-year to Sept 30, 1983. Figures in £000. Turnover 10,784 (8,827). Pretax profit 150 (100). Superdrug Stores: Nine months to Nov 26, 1983. Figures in £000. Turnover 72,272 (58,642). Pretax profit 4,969 (3,891). Electric and General Investment Company: Half-year to Nov 30, 1983. Gross income £1.12m (£650,000). Interim payment raised from 1.1p to 1.35p a share and board predicts maintained final of 1.75p a share.

COMMODITIES	Dec 22	Dec 21	Dec 20	Dec 19	Dec 18	Dec 17
COFFEE	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
COCOA	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
SUGAR	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
RUBBER	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
CRUDE OIL	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
WHEAT	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
CORN	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
SUGAR	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
COPPER	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
ZINC	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
LEAD	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
NICKEL	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
PLATINUM	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
PALM OIL	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
SOYBEANS	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15

### COMMODITIES

COMMODITIES	Dec 22	Dec 21	Dec 20	Dec 19	Dec 18	Dec 17
COFFEE	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
COCOA	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
SUGAR	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
RUBBER	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
CRUDE OIL	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
WHEAT	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
CORN	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
SUGAR	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
COPPER	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
ZINC	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
LEAD	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
NICKEL	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
PLATINUM	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
PALM OIL	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15
SOYBEANS	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15	154.15

## Shake-up for Wavy Line

Mace and Wavy Line, recently merged to become the largest group of small grocers operating as a "symbol" chain, is planning a big shake-up to meet increasing high street competition.

Two main new thrusts have emerged largely from a three-year investigation of store development at Wavy Line which has been operating totally under the umbrella of Booker McConnell whose other retailing operations include the Budget Supermarkets.

Mr Derek Abbott, hitherto chairman of Wavy Line, has just become chief executive of the merged Mace-Wavy Line operation. Mace having been 70 per cent a Booker organization with a number of other wholesalers also involved.

Part of the merged chain, mostly rather larger outlets, is to be revamped under a scheme aimed at making such outlets more competitive with the big multiple grocery chains. Others in the chain will be encouraged to emphasize the convenience store concept, with early, late and weekend opening in a style most big supermarkets do not match.

On offer are new decor, new marketing plans and other developments aimed at adding a more positive approach to retailing in the merged chain whose members now number 3,800, some of them with more than one outlet. But the biggest proportion of the members operate single shops run typically by husband and wife teams.

Although Mace-Wavy Line has the largest number of members, who are essentially franchisees operating under the symbol banner, it still lags behind Spar in share of the packaged grocery market. Spar, the other leading symbol chain, has 2.5 per cent market share against Mace-Wavy Line at 1.8 per cent. VG is number three in the symbol league with a market share of less than 1 per cent.

By Derek Harris

Abbott says: "The Trader's Opportunity Plan, TOP for short, has been 50 per cent a Wavy Line development but it has now been proved in 112 stores and will be pushed through nationally this coming year. By the end of 1984 there should be up to 500 TOP stores."

The idea is to refurbish stores, with outside fascias emphasising the name of the retailer running it and operated under a merchandising plan put together by the symbol chain's specialists.

One Essex store underwent the treatment at a cost of around £8,500 compared with the £3,000 it would have cost just to have a repaint. A Kent outlet in its first year after the TOP treatment saw turnover rise by a quarter, with a gross profit margin increase of 2 per cent.

Abbott said: "We cannot match the multiples on price. But we have to make sure that there is no more than 10 per cent difference in the shopping basket for purchases in our TOP stores compared with the multiples. In the TOP stores already operating the average sales uplift has been 16 per cent. And they are more geared to higher profit margin products."

Frozen and fresh foods, delicatessen items and alcoholic drinks are important parts of the mix. Drinks are an important sales generator and an important key to drawing customers to shops. The chain has 2,200 of its outlets licensed. Specific prices can be guaranteed within the TOP scheme allowing the chain to offer special deals to food and drink manufacturers, the concomitant of which are specially discounted prices from the makers. Until now only the big multiples have been able to make such offers to manufacturers with an end result of bringing prices down to the customer.

So far 700 of the chain's stores have been re-launched as convenience stores. Within two years the number is expected to double because this is seen as one of the strongest ploys of the small retailer in meeting the competition of the supermarkets.

Further into the future Abbott believes the introduction of laser-scanning systems at check-out tills will be crucial for a smaller retailer. This is because such systems not only fine-tune systems like stock control but enable swift response to price changes by competing retailers.

While most big multiple chains are gearing up for the widespread use of the electronic computerised systems, Mace-Wavy Line already has one store in Scotland operating live to establish an effective mode of operation for the smaller retailer. There are indications it could produce an overheads saving of 0.75 per cent going straight to the bottom line, according to Abbott.



"This is what I hate most about Christmas - my office party"



Derek Abbott: aiming at 500 TOP stores

Last week I discussed the problems of smaller companies attempting to expand and the difficulties involved in raising the finance to do it.

Some form of equity funding emerged as the most desirable way of achieving support. A major problem is an inadequate preparedness business prospectus.

It is a company's principal sales tool in raising capital. They will want to see that to determine that an entrepreneur is as capable of responding effectively to opportunities as problems. Keep it under 30 pages and succinct.

The following guidelines will help. Begin with a summary of the industry, your company and its product or service. Give a market research analysis to include customers, the market size and the competition you face in it. Give an accurate appraisal of market share and don't exaggerate sales. And your view of how the market is likely to evolve.

Then go straight in to your marketing proposals. What is the strategy, pricing, sales tactics,

## Getting the prospectus right

the service and guarantee policies backing that up and what are the advertising and promotion needs.

If a manufacturer what is your current development status and the difficulties and risks involved? How can the product or service be improved and at what cost? Can business be improved by changing location - to a rate free enterprise zone, for instance? Do your facilities need upgrading? What are the future strategy and plans in this area? Is enough skilled labour available locally?

Follow that with a management breakdown: how the firm is organized, who are the key personnel and what compensation and equity stake they have. Are they directors? Is further management assistance needed? Admit your weaknesses so that they can be offset. Professional services and outside work may be necessary. It may be acquired cheaper by bringing it in-house.

By Wayne Lintott

Give an overall schedule showing the timing and interrelationship of the events necessary to realize the stated objectives. Show clearly the order of events between start-up market penetration and the evolving costs. Show all the critical risks and problems that might disturb that process and how the company can overcome them.

Finally, the financial plan. You will need profit and loss forecasts, cash flow analysis, balance sheet, break-even charts and cost controls. Give past income statements, cash flow break-downs and previous break-even records. What finance is needed, what security or equity is being offered, how much will the company be capitalized at and how are the funds going to be used?



















**BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS**  
 (Continued from page 19)  
 Announcements published in this section are accepted for publication on the day of the event. For a full list of names, please refer to the original publication in the Times.

**BIRTHS**  
 BOONER, On December 17th in St Thomas Hospital, St Thomas, to the wife of Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Booner, a son, James John, a brother to Thomas and John. Aged 1 year 10 months. Family address: 10, St Thomas, London SE1 1TH.

**DEATHS**  
 BURROWS, On December 21st at 11.15 AM, after a long illness, Mrs. M. J. Burrows, nee Jones, aged 82 years, of 10, St Thomas, London SE1 1TH. Burial at St Thomas Church, London SE1 1TH, on December 23rd at 11.15 AM. Family address: 10, St Thomas, London SE1 1TH.

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**ANNOUNCEMENTS**  
 FOG Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year to both the firm and all our customers. C. J. Fog.

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**PERSONAL COLUMNS**  
**HOLIDAYS AND VILLAS**  
**BLADON LINES**  
 THE MAJOR ISLANDS OF THE CARIBBEAN AND THE MEDITERRANEAN. Bladon Lines Travel.

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**BUSINESS TO GO**  
**BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES**  
**COMMERCIAL SERVICES**  
**COMMERCIAL SERVICES**  
**COMMERCIAL SERVICES**

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 also on page 19

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**BMW**  
 1983 BMW 750i  
 323i 1982  
 1980 BMW 635CSi  
 1980 BMW 323i  
 1983 BMW 750i  
 323i 1982  
 1980 BMW 635CSi  
 1980 BMW 323i

**Collectors cars**  
 Jensen Interceptor MK1  
 1948 Bentley  
 Porsche

**THEATRES**  
 Apollo Victoria  
 Royal Festival Hall  
 Royal Opera House  
 Theatre Royal, Drury Lane  
 Theatre Royal, Haymarket  
 Theatre Royal, Covent Garden  
 Theatre Royal, Haymarket  
 Theatre Royal, Covent Garden  
 Theatre Royal, Haymarket  
 Theatre Royal, Covent Garden

**CONCERTS**  
 Royal Festival Hall  
 Royal Opera House  
 Theatre Royal, Drury Lane  
 Theatre Royal, Haymarket  
 Theatre Royal, Covent Garden  
 Theatre Royal, Haymarket  
 Theatre Royal, Covent Garden  
 Theatre Royal, Haymarket

**CHRISTMAS DEADLINES**  
 Issue 26 December  
 Issue 27 December  
 Issue 28 December  
 Issue 29 December  
 Issue 30 December  
 Issue 31 December  
 Issue 1 January  
 Issue 2 January  
 Issue 3 January  
 Issue 4 January







